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THE SHADY HILL PLAY BOOK

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and
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TO

AGNES AND ERNEST HOCKING

THIS FIRST BOOK OF PLAYS

FROM THE SHADY HILL SCHOOL

IS DEDICATED

PREFACE

The brevity of some of these plays may be startling to some readers, but not to those who have worked intimately with children in informal class work. Children keep a sense of form only when working within very limited dimensions. Large dimensions result in the kind of loose, wandering, joyful aimlessness that characterizes a very young child's story-telling. But even the young listeners to such a story become restless before the narrator reaches a pause. The same thing is true in acting. A long, complicated play produced by children seldom achieves the distinction of action or speech or spontaneity that a brief play can achieve. And the teacher or coach, in dealing with a long play, often discovers herself faced at the last moment with a strained or lifeless production due to overtraining.

The plays in this book have come out of the daily life of the school. Every day the entire school, excepting occasionally the youngest two classes, comes together at the beginning of the morning for a brief assembly, lasting anywhere from ten minutes to half an hour. Three or four mornings out of the five the

assembly is planned by one of the classes or by a smaller group of children. The subject matter ranges over the universe in a most reckless manner, but through it every class is given a glimpse into the interests of every other class. One day a science class demonstrates facts about air pressure by graphic illustration and actual experiment. Another day a mathematics class shows how the height of a tall tree can be measured without climbing it or cutting it down. A history class explains the siege of a mediaeval town, by diagrams, models, pictures, reading of historical sources, and dramatization. A group pantomimes, for the school to guess, the manners of every small insect and animal they have found on the school grounds. Another group celebrates an October day by reciting the most beautiful poems they have found about windy weather.

The daily assembly, besides being the meeting ground for interests, is of great value in the teaching of subject matter. The child who can organize his knowledge of a subject, and present it clearly and interestingly to the other pupils of the school, and stand up well against their questions, needs very little other review or examination on this subject. This holds as true for a history play made by the children—Deus Volt; Roland—as for a demonstration in mathematics or science. In making a play, we must be sure to choose incidents that make clear our idea, or that truly show the aspect of life we have chosen to portray. Our characters must think and talk and act, as far as we can make them, like true people of their time. We must know our subject matter far more thoroughly

than most brief textbooks permit, before we can make a good play out of it. We try to look at the sculpture, architecture, painting, bookmaking of the time; read the poetry and legend of the time; study the way of life of townspeople, country people, travelers, castle dwellers, seafarers. Play-making is thin without such background. With it, however, a play may achieve reality and distinction, and may become a significant part of education.

The atmosphere of the daily assemblies is familiar, simple, informal. Artificiality of manner and "showing off" find no place.* The audience is always a natural one—the children and teachers we live with day in and day out, and usually some of the parents—with the interest that members of a family have in each knowing what the other is about. Frequent experience in acting, demonstrating, explaining things before this audience of one hundred to one hundred and fifty people enables a child to keep the same naturalness and simplicity in the special programs, such as Christmas and Closing Day, which are given before audiences of four or five hundred people.

Every kind of dramatization has its place in our assemblies. With the youngest classes the explanation of a process is often recapitulated by a dramatization of it (how to bring a ship into port, how to catch a seal, how to tell a grasshopper from a cricket). A fifth grade acts an ancient Eastern folk tale with no more special costuming than a plume, a scarf and a hobbyhorse; but acts it with added precision and

* See Francis W. Parker School Studies in Education. Vol. II, 1913: The Morning Exercise as a Socializing Influence. 330 Webster Avenue, Chicago, Illinois.

style because they have studied some of the Persian miniatures in the Art Museum. A Crusade play is built up carefully as the outcome of six weeks' study of the Crusades, using the Crusaders' own chronicles. A great epic—Song of Roland; Völsunga Saga—is converted into a play, involving severe training in the selection of the significant scenes and speeches from the long narrative. The Chester Noah Play is given to illustrate an activity of the guilds of the time. Now and then a more intensive piece of work is done, resulting in a more finished performance. For children as well as adults, if given a chance, have a real appreciation of technique and shape, and will work hard to achieve it. There is room in school life not only for impromptu dramatizations but also for more carefully worked out plays, with attention to precision of action, lighting, and staging. The plays of Aucassin et Nicolette, The Shepherds, and The Prophets were given in this more thoroughgoing manner, one or two each year. But all of these various types of school play-making seem to us closely related to the habit of teaching history through source material, and to the habit of the daily assembly.

This collection of plays may, we hope, remind its readers of plays they have enjoyed working on, or suggest to them the making of new plays. A play as a finished product may be interesting and worth remembering. But its real meaning is in the doing. As soon as one play is ended we find ourselves thinking ahead toward the next. There is a special pleasure, also, in the collaboration of play-making. These plays represent the combined work of history, French and

English teachers, music department, studio, shop, and volunteer lighting expert. We wish to note here our appreciation of all the work done by Miss Rosamond Conant, teacher of drawing, Miss Elizabeth E. Hancock, teacher of music, and Mrs. Guy Lee, teacher of French, all members of the Shady Hill School staff. The history teaching done by Miss Anne Longfellow Thorp has supplied the background and the inspiration for the writing of many of these plays; they have been acted under her direction, and without her work this book could scarcely have existed. Most of all, our plays must acknowledge their existence to class after class of Shady Hill children who year in and year out take to play-making and play-acting as ducks to water.

K. T.

Shady Hill School,
Cambridge, Mass.

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INTRODUCTION: A STAGE FOR ANY SCHOOL

While few school buildings include a theater, most have a hall, or at least a large room like ours, in which plays are given. But the absence of scenery, of stage lights and even of a stage hampers both actors and audience. The plays which the children at our school made and acted had educational value for them and charm for their parents; but when the audiences were large, as for instance at Christmas, spectators behind the front half-dozen rows used to be spectators in little but name. Between the heads and over the shoulders of those in front, they could see a standing actor only down to his hips, while of an actor seated they saw only the head. This varying visibility in turn limited the action itself; for who, for instance, could freely plan the "business" of a mortal combat, if the final struggle on the ground would be unseen by four-fifths of the craning audience? Experience and considerations such as these set us to calculating the costs of a raised stage, for which we found that we could spare neither the space nor the cash. The platform, which we next planned, would have been movable: but too clumsy to store. Thus the problem looked insoluble. With a Christmas play impending, we were driven to an invention; and that invention has now served us so stimulatingly for a series of years that we think it quite worth presenting to other schools.

The advantages of the scheme are these: it gives us at minimum cost a stage which not only can be seen from all parts of our hall, but which rises to two or more levels at need. At the same time it offers elements of suggestive, not realistic, scenery. And it offers all this in a form as substantial as it is adaptable, as permanent as it is variable. Yet this stage can be easily removed and stowed away. The secret which eluded us so long is simply a system of units.

We build our stage and much of our scenery, or rather our various stages and scenes, as children build platforms, castles and walls, with blocks. Only our blocks are giants' blocks which, for lightness' sake, are knocked together with plank. And while such work can of course be done by a carpentry class, we have found, as a matter of fact, that the units can be built at a local box factory for less than the retail cost of the lumber.

You are properly sceptical, of course, about a plan which sounds so crude. Building a stage with boxes, and scenery too! How broken, how garish the scene must look! But it does not look broken and garish, and for two reasons. The proportions, of the boxes themselves and of each of the three unit sizes to the rest, are the first reason. The color is the second.

Our three unit sizes are as follows: Number One is a box 2′x3′x21″ in outside dimensions, and is 1″ thick. It may be ordered from the box factory, without a cover. Set open side down, it makes a substantial piece of stage. Number Two is half as long as Number One; in other words it is a cube, 2′x18″x21″, outside dimensions. It also is 1″ thick. It also may

be ordered without a cover, and set upside down. With 18 Number One units and 4 Number Two units —placed like the bricks in a pavement, with the joints in each row opposite the middle of each brick in the adjoining row—you can make a one-level stage 20 feet wide and 10 feet deep. With more boxes, wider variations in staging may of course be produced.

The Number Three unit, used principally for steps, is short like Number Two, but only half as high, and is oblong like Number One. The outside dimensions therefore are 18″x12″x10″. It has neither top nor back. Like Number One and Number Two it is 1″ thick. Four Number Threes set upside down and with their open backs against the front of a stage 20 feet wide, make a convenient central approach, for example, for a procession coming up the middle aisle, and mounting to the stage.

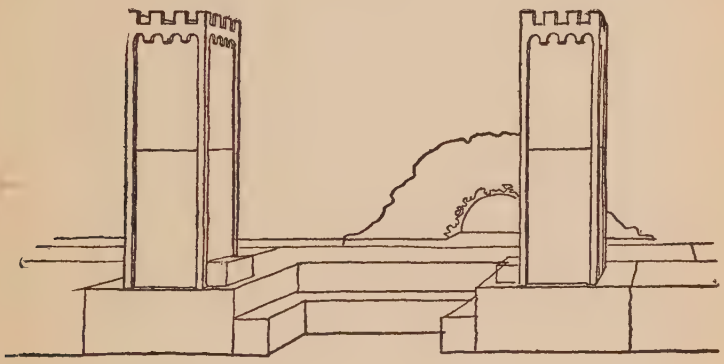
Before taking up the use of these units for other types of stage and for elements of scenery, let us turn back a moment to the question of color. To cancel the contrasts between the natural colors of the planks from which the boxes are built, a darkish tone is required. In using the same units, in other combinations, for walls and towers, a deep, faintly greenish grey is convenient. By the method of trial and error we have found that, for all sorts of effects, from Nicolette's tower to the rocks at Roncevaux and a cave in The Tempest, we get an astonishingly workable tone by painting the planed pine plank of our boxes with an equal mixture of No. 44 Bay State Waxo, and Bay State Penetrating Silver Grey Stain,

both of which may be procured at the Wadsworth, Howland Co., Boston.

To return to the question of stages. Instead of limiting the producer to a conventional flat stage, our system of units stimulates him, or rather the groups of child-producers, to imagine and construct an individual stage for each individual play. In the course of rehearsals, the new ideas on scenery which the children suggest can be tried out by easy shifts. We remove a box unit here, and two or more there, until our set fits the action closely. And that set, in turn, stimulates the actors to invent, during rehearsal, bits of action which otherwise would hardly have occurred either to them, or even to the canniest coach. Take for example Thackeray's Rose and the Ring. Our children produced it not on one stage but on two. The left-hand stage stood for a bed chamber; the right-hand stage for a throne room. Steps led down from each to a sort of courtyard between, at the back of which was the castle wall with a central entrance gate from the outer world.

The *sine qua non* for a stage is that it lift the action high enough for the whole audience to see. Given this minimum, all manner of variety is not only admissible but right. Take the case of Aucassin and Nicolette. A play made from the story was exquisitely produced by Miss King and Miss Coit, then of the Buckingham School, Cambridge. They built and painted a vertical instead of a horizontal stage, a stage all battlements and turrets, with one practicable level of action right above another. It was like an illuminated page of a missal set upright before you.

Our far less elaborate setting still served the purpose of stimulating the children to invent delightful episodes of action—action which also was much better defined than children's acting is apt to be on the uninterrupted expanse of a conventional stage. The front of our stage, to begin with, did not run in one straight line across the hall. The middle was set back half its

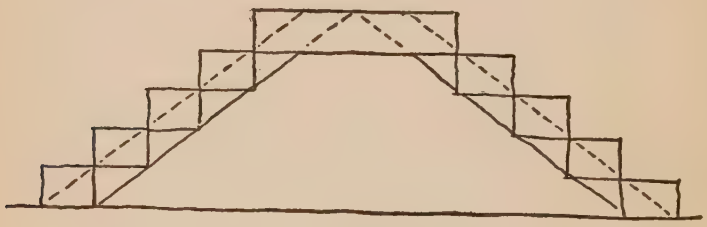


depth, thus leaving a space, open in front, from which the actors could mount to the stage by a continuous line of steps along the middle and each side. Dominating this recess two towers stood at the two front corners. One was the watch-tower in which Nicolette was imprisoned; the other was the castle-tower at Beaucaire. At the very back a little hill, not realistic of course, but suggestive, rose steeply to its apex. And under it, in the center, was that shaded bower in which, as you remember, Aucassin rested when he sang his song to the evening star.

For the back and sides of this stage set we were fortunate in having what looked like faded tapestries;

dim forest and mountain scenes, painted to represent tapestry, by an artist of some note. Neutral-tinted curtains, however, would serve well for such a background, especially if cleverly lighted.

To come back to our stage. Let us first look at the hill as a specimen of "unit construction." Our hill was built like a letter A, with its top cut off at the cross-bar. The two sides were essentially stepladders, each made by nailing two parallel, sloping planks to the inside of the ends of a series of Number Three step units.



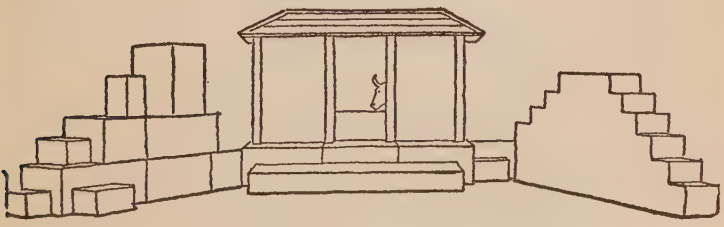
To the front of this construction was tacked a piece of stiff binder's cloth, of the same neutral color as our boxes; and this stiff cloth, more than covering the structure, was cut into the desired outline of a hill. By such simple means we not only suggested the scene, but produced a substantial set over which Aucassin might safely caracole on horseback.

The towers, equally substantial, were built with two Number One units set on end, one above the other, and nailed together as well as to the stage. They were strengthened by upright strips, like pilasters, at the corners, and crowned with battlements. Strips of wood nailed across the open backs of these towers

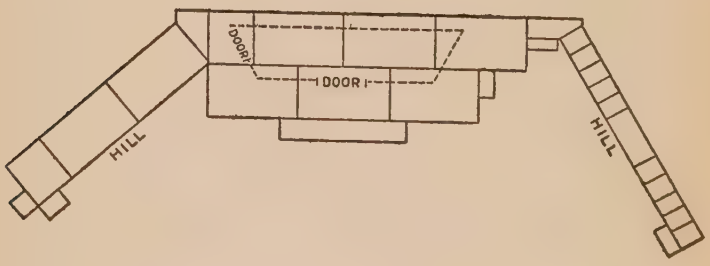
formed ladders, by which the Watchmen could mount. By one of these ladders Nicolette also climbed to the top of her prison where, in a charming scene, she leaned over the battlements toward the unseeing Aucassin seated at its foot. But it was down the sheer front of the tower that she lowered herself, by a rope of torn and knotted sheet, down past the stage level to the lowest ground of all.

The stage set for just one more play may be enough for our purpose in suggesting the almost infinitely varied uses of our three box units.

The Shepherds demanded a shallow scene so as to leave all possible space for the audience. It required a stable for the Nativity, and a hill from which the shepherds might watch their sheep. The stable, with its wattled walls and thatched roof, was made with a light framework to hold its beaver-board sides and roof. These were painted by an art class. The stable, less than three feet deep, was set in the center and at the back of the hall, on a shallow stage made of Number One units, occupying only about a third of the scene in width. On each side, the stage ran forward and out at an obtuse angle, so that the extreme front of each wing was only ten feet from the back wall.



Looking at this stage from the audience, you saw the two wings leading symmetrically inward and back toward the middle section, where the stable stood with its door closed. The stage wing to your left was on several levels, so that a shepherd entering and climbing to the highest level could spy across to the hillock which rose from the opposite stage wing on your right. The entering shepherd could halloo to the shepherds on the opposite hillock, then go down past the stable and climb the hill to join his fellows. All this took



place in plain sight of the audience and on contrasted shallow levels of stage which not only lent picturesqueness to the scene, but made the action itself almost inevitably varied and clean-cut.

The shepherd ignored the stable in passing it, just as anyone in real life will ignore any and all objects in which he has no immediate interest. The audience, for their part, had their attention fixed on the shepherd, with his back half turned, climbing down the rocks and crossing the more distant center of the stage, to come forward again on the right. They also ignored the stable with its closed door, because their interest was focused alternately on the two stage

wings. But later, when light shone down from the Star of Bethlehem through the broken thatch of the stable roof, and when Joseph slid back the door, and interest was focussed alternately on the two stage- revealed Mary between the ox and the ass, in the light which shone up into her face from the unseen Child in the manger, the eyes and minds of the shepherds kneeling at the manger, and of the spectators too in their quiet darkness, saw just that vision, and nothing else. A margin was non-existent.

When the sets for all the scenes of a play have been arranged in a various, yet single and harmonious whole, the action successively concentrates itself and successively concentrates the spectators' attention, first on one, then on another significant point in the setting. It does this swiftly and smoothly, with none of the jolts and delays of shifted scenes or raised and lowered "drops." Yet the spectators' concentration may be enhanced as we have just seen, and new visual values may be created, by quite simple methods of lighting.

When a play is to be given by day, and the hall cannot conveniently be darkened, we sometimes secure our lighting effects by reversing the usual methods: instead of darkening the auditorium and lighting the stage, we leave our audience in daylight which we partly screen from the stage. By the use of shadow, here faint, there somewhat deeper and again very dark, the setting can be given a certain magic of light and shade.

While not so simple as this, the system of lighting which we have found most useful is perhaps the simplest consistent with the use of colored light. And

colored light is well-nigh indispensable. It is a fairy wand, silently transforming costumes, backgrounds and stage sets at will, if you learn its subtler ways. Technically clever stage-lighting is often garish; spot-lights drag scenes into the foreground with such a glare that one talks of illumination with precaution. Still, there it is, a means less apt for misuse than it is for wide variety of charm. And the way of using it which we have found simplest is this.

Abolishing foot-lights and borders, we limit ourselves (with certain exceptions) to two groups of three 100-watt electric lights at a moderate height (say 10 feet) above the stage, and about 10 feet away from it. One group is placed on each side of the stage and about a third of the width from each end. Both groups are directed toward the center of the stage; and each light, backed with diffusely reflecting white, is so shaded that it individually illuminates the whole scene and nothing else. Each of the three lights on each side is colored with one of the three primary colors; and each is connected with a switchboard in full view of the stage, and is controlled by a small individual rheostat.

In theory it is thus obviously possible to throw on the stage, from two directions, light of whatever color you please. While in practice there are limitations, this simple arrangement enables you to paint the stage not only with colored light, but with shades and intensities of colored light that you may vary almost at will.

It must of course be remembered that we are painting with light, and that our primary colors are not like those of pigments, red, blue and yellow, but are

the primary colors of light, purple, green and orange. You have to experiment to find shades that are as nearly as possible correct: not too heavy a purple, for instance, and a somewhat yellowish green. A fair variety of colors may be found in the "gelatine" sold by dealers in movie apparatus. This material, which shrivels in contact with a hot electric bulb, may be held a couple of inches away from your bulbs by a light framework to which it is easily fastened with gummed black paper. This material may also be pasted on the edges of your gelatine screens, so as to shade the individual lights, as described above, and thus prevent their throwing light to the right or left of the stage, or perhaps on such a sky as one of ours. For our sky was muslin of an opaque blue by direct light; but in shadow it had the almost fluid depth of night heavens.

Such lighting, and such stage sets as we have described, combine to favor continuity of action. With a little care in constructing or adapting plays, breaks in the action are unnecessary. No curtain need be lowered between scenes. Nor need there be a curtain even at the beginning and the end. For in contrast with the bright hall while the spectators are taking their seats, the unlighted, empty stage claims no attention. When the hall is darkened, and light brings out the stage, the actors' entrance marks the opening of a play. In such short plays as ours the action can well continue without break to an end. And that is marked by the players' exit, most often in a procession through the relighted hall, while the stage subsides again into shadow.

A STAGE FOR ANY SCHOOL

A double set of primary-colored lights, individually controlled; an adequate supply of box units of three types: these are the tools which successive teachers and classes in our school have tried and proved, and found always more and more stimulating and adaptable. With imagination and patience, you can certainly use these tools to advantage. We offer them to you with confidence that, in your hands, they will make for individual stage setting and action.

H. C. G.

THE SHADY HILL PLAY BOOK

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THE PROPHETS

The dialogue of this play was taken from the book of Isaiah, except for the last few speeches from St. Luke and St. John. It suggests a relation between the prophecies of Isaiah and the events of Jesus' life which is obviously out of accord with historic criticism. It suggests, however, no literal connection. For we have used the passages which we have chosen rather to convey an impression of religious meaning in the Christmas festival.

The tone of the play is purposely abstract and austere. The characters are not named. The Man and Woman might be any man and woman. Their suffering might be of any epoch. The two Watchmen are simply men of slightly more distant spiritual vision. The Chorus and its Leader are abstractions too. As in certain of the Greek dramas, they express thoughts or moods unspoken by the characters but true to the situation; or stepping momentarily into the action, they challenge one or another actor by phrase or question.

The Prophets foretell the coming ruler in two ways. In the spirit of the Old Testament the Prophet of Jehovah describes a powerful, just, and glorious king. The Prophet of the Messiah foresees a simple, yet miracle-working ruler for humanity, and a bringer of hope. From this vision the transition to St. Luke's narrative is as close in thought as it may be distant in history.

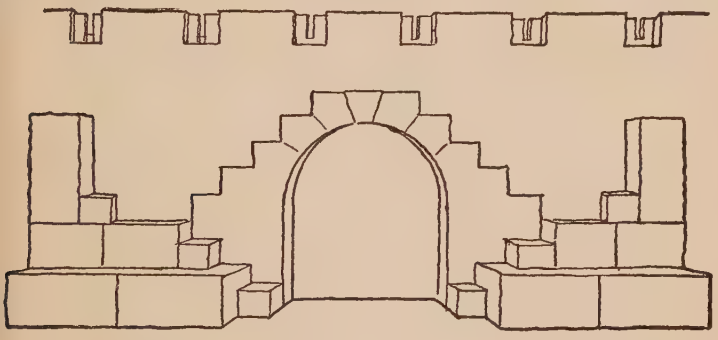
The action is all slow, severe, and rather archaic. The symmetry of the stage is preserved in the positions of the characters.

The Chorus and Leader enter first, and place themselves on the platform to the right of the gate. After singing The Lord of All they remain motionless until just before singing Awake, awake—when they climb the steps over the arch and stand in two symmetrical lines. They then descend to their former position for the rest of the play. The steps over the arch are used again by the four Seraphs, who kneel there, two on either side, while the Shepherds kneel at the manger. The Prophets enter through the audience, down the long aisle, as though coming from far off. This aisle is used again for the procession of all the actors, except those in the scene of the Nativity, going out at the end of the play.

At the back stage set, the walls of Bethlehem extended across the whole stage. They were represented by a uniform surface of neutral color (the same blue-gray binder's cloth used in other plays) which rose about twelve feet to a line of battlements (binder's cloth on a light framework nailed to the back wall of the room). Between the battlements

and above them rose the sky (blue cheese-cloth tacked to the upper wall and ceiling of the room). In the middle of the stage, at the back, a deep arch was built. From the arch to the two turrets, one at each side of the stage, were the raised walks used by the Watchmen.

In construction, the arch was like the hill in Aucassin and Nicolette.* The differences were that the



steps, rising from a stage of No. 1 boxes on each side, were left visible; and that the whole front of the construction was covered with neutral-colored binder's cloth, in shapes like blocks of masonry with a keystone at the center. The deep underside of the arch was covered in the same way. The space below was closed in by two doors (light framework, covered on both sides with brown cloth). And when these doors were opened (forward) they revealed a barrel-vaulted stable, filling the space of the arch, under the town walls.

The middle of the stage was the floor of our hall,

* See Introduction.

too low for good visibility. This space, however, was little used, except in the Nativity scene; and in that both the Virgin's seat and the manger were somewhat raised. On each side of the central doorway a No. 3 box-step led right and left to a stage of No. 1 boxes, from which steps, returning toward the center again, led up to that narrow walk above the arch. From that walk and from suggested towers (No. 1 boxes on end, approached by No. 3 boxes also on end) on the extreme right and left of the scene, actors could look out between the battlements. But in the actual course of the play, the Watchmen and Prophets, for instance, on the upper levels of the stage, faced away from the battlements and forward, when gazing into the distance.

Our lighting of the play was, on the whole, symbolic. To the realistic chill and dimness of the opening scene, we added faintly brighter and warmer tones (possibly suggesting the approach of dawn), a little at a time, but on one side of the stage or the other, to emphasize the action. In the Nativity scene, of course, we concentrated attention on the stable by softening the illumination of the outer stage, and by lighting Mary's face from amber lights concealed in the manger, and behind the arch. And toward the end of the play we gradually intensified our lighting, in harmony with the text, to our maximum of warmth and brightness.

With the indication of general method given in the introduction of the book, other producers of this play can easily work out their own interpretations in light and color.

We planned our costumes also more to interpret the feeling of the play than to represent historic place and time. The Watchmen wore severe, knee-length steel-colored tunics; the Chorus wore varying and blending shades of gray, mauve, etc.; the Man and Woman earthier colors; the Prophets, one gray-purple and the other white.

The music, with the exception of the two Bach chorales, was old traditional Hebrew music, and the special quality of it greatly strengthened the mood of the play.

THE PROPHETS

Characters

Leader of Chorus
Chorus
Man
Woman
Two Watchmen
Prophet of Jehovah
Prophet of the Messiah
Three Wise Men
Angel
Three Shepherds
Four Little Seraphs
The Holy Family

THE PROPHETS

(Music: Kol Nidre played as a Prelude, by violin, cello and piano, while the stage remains empty and dimly lighted; repeated in part as the Leader and members of the Chorus slowly enter and seat themselves in irregular grouping on steps and stage R., the Leader standing, forward. After a brief pause the Chorus rises and sings Lord of All, then again sits. Or they may remain seated while they sing. The Leader remains standing throughout the play. The Man and Woman enter, and cross to steps L. They do not notice the Chorus.)

MAN: For upon the summer fruits and upon the harvest the battle shout is fallen.

WOMAN: And gladness is taken away, and joy out of the fields.

MAN: And in the vineyards there shall be no singing, neither joyful noise; no treader shall tread out the wine presses.

WOMAN: For all this his anger is not turned away; but his hand is stretched out still!

MAN: Because they have rejected the law of the Lord of hosts, the anger of the Lord is kindled against his people, and he hath stretched forth his hand against them and smitten them.

WOMAN: For all this his anger is not turned away; but his hand is stretched out still!

MAN (*rising and stepping out where he can look far off*): The very hills did tremble; the land is burnt up; the people also are as fuel or fire; no man spareth his brother.

WOMAN: For all this his anger is not turned away, but his hand is stretched out still! (*She gives herself over to grief.*)

MAN: Behold, the Lord maketh the earth empty. All joy is darkened, the mirth of the land is gone.

WOMAN (*rising and coming to him*): Jehovah hath forsaken me, and the Lord hath forgotten me.

MAN: How shall I comfort thee? It is a day of perplexity; a breaking down of the walls, and a crying to the mountains.

WOMAN: We grope for the wall like the blind; we look for light, but behold darkness.

LEADER (*who has been watching them and listening, unseen*): Lord, thy hand is lifted up, yet they see not. (*This is not heard by the Man and Woman.*)

MAN: Righteousness standeth afar off; Truth is fallen in the street.

LEADER (*appearing to them*): Enlarge the place of thy tent, and let them stretch forth the curtains of thine habitations; spare not: lengthen thy cords, and strengthen thy stakes.

(*The Man and Woman are dazed by this appearance. They draw back.*)

I WATCHMAN (*outside, approaching R.*):

The voice of thy Watchmen! They lift up the voice,
Together do they sing;
For they shall see, eye to eye,
How the Lord returneth to Zion.

(*The two Watchmen enter, I R., II L., and greet each other.*)

II WATCHMAN:

Break forth into joy, sing together,
Ye waste places of Jerusalem:
For the Lord hath comforted his people,
He hath redeemed Jerusalem.

MAN (*incredulous*): Who hath believed that which we have heard?

WOMAN: And to whom hath the arm of the Lord been revealed?

LEADER (*to Man and Woman*): All vision is become unto you as words of a book that is sealed, which men deliver to one that is learned, saying, Read this, I pray thee: and he saith, I cannot, for it is sealed.

I WATCHMAN:

Go through, go through the gates;
Prepare ye the way of the people.

II WATCHMAN:

Cast up, cast up the highway; gather out the stones.
Lift up an ensign for the people.

(*The Watchmen climb to the turret and gaze into the distance. They beckon to the Prophet of Jehovah, coming afar off. The Prophet enters down middle aisle.*)

PROPHET OF JEHOVAH (*as he approaches*):

Prepare ye in the wilderness the way of the Lord,
Make straight in the desert a highway for our God.
(*Turning to face audience as he reaches stage*):
Every valley shall be exalted
And every mountain and hill shall be made low:
And the crooked shall be made straight,
And the rough places plain.
And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed.

(*The Man and Woman have been listening intently, amazed.*)

LEADER (*to Man and Woman*): Cry!

MAN (*recovering himself, remembering his doubt*):

What shall I cry?
The grass withereth, the flower fadeth,
Because the breath of the Lord bloweth upon it.
Surely the people is grass!

PROPHET OF JEHOVAH:

The grass withereth, the flower fadeth:
But the word of our God shall stand forever.

LEADER (*turning upon the Man and Woman*): Ye dwellers on earth, when an ensign is lifted up on the mountains, see ye; and when the trumpet is blown, hear ye.

I WATCHMAN (*to Prophet of Jehovah*):

O thou that tellest good tidings to Zion,
Get thee up into the high mountain.

II WATCHMAN:

O thou that tellest good tidings to Jerusalem,
Lift up thy voice with strength,
Lift it up, be not afraid;
Say unto the cities of Judah,
Behold your God!

LEADER: For the windows on high are opened, and the foundations of the earth do shake. The earth is moved exceedingly.

PROPHET OF JEHOVAH (*exalted, as though seeing a vision*):

And the Lord put on righteousness as a breastplate, and an helmet of salvation upon his head.

Fear not, saith the Lord, I have called thee by name. Thou art mine.

In paths that they know not will I lead them: I will make darkness light before them, and crooked places straight.

LEADER: Thus saith God the Lord, he that created the heavens, and stretched them forth; he that spread abroad the earth and that which cometh out of it; he that giveth

breath unto the people upon it, and spirit to them that walk therein.

WOMAN (*in awe, to the Prophet*): Good is the word of the Lord which thou hast spoken.

PROPHET OF JEHOVAH: And he shall judge between nations: and they shall beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning hooks.

Nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.

They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain, saith the Lord.

(*The Prophet goes down, across, and up to the higher steps, L., just below the Watchman's turret.*)

MAN (*after watching the Prophet ascend*):

The people that walked in darkness
Have seen a great light:

WOMAN (*rejoicing*):

They that dwelt in the land of the shadow of death,
Upon them hath the light shined.

CHORUS (*chanting*):

Sing unto the Lord a new song,
And his praise from the end of the earth;
Ye that go down to the sea, and all that is therein,
The isles, and the inhabitants thereof.
Let the wilderness and the cities thereof lift up their voice,
Let them give glory unto the Lord,
And declare his praise in the islands.

(*A pause*)

LEADER:

The whole earth is at rest, and is quiet:
They break forth into singing:
Yea, the fir trees rejoice at thee,
And the cedars of Lebanon.

MAN (*bewildered, appealing to Watchman*): Watchman, what of the night?

WOMAN: Watchman, what of the night?

I WATCHMAN: The morning cometh.

II WATCHMAN (*pointing afar off*):

How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him
That bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace,
That bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation,
That saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth!

(*The Prophet of the Messiah comes down the center aisle, climbs to the lower steps, R., and stands there.*)

PROPHET OF THE MESSIAH: And a man shall be as an hiding place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest; as rivers of water in a dry place, as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land.

PROPHET OF JEHOVAH: And the spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him.

PROPHET OF THE MESSIAH:

He shall feed his flock like a shepherd,
He shall gather the lambs in his arm,
And carry them in his bosom,
And shall gently lead those that are with young.

For unto us a child is born,
Unto us a son is given;
And the government shall be upon his shoulder:
And his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor,
Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

(*During the next speech the Prophet of the Messiah goes slowly across and up the turret stairs to join the Prophet of Jehovah.*)

LEADER (*stepping to center, addressing whole audience*):

Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. Then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb shall sing: for in the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert. And the glowing sand shall become a pool, and the thirsty ground springs of water. And an highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called the way of holiness.

(*Music, instrumental. The Prophets descend to a lower position. The Chorus members climb the steps and stand, symmetrically, on either side of the arch. They lift their arms high over their heads, and lower them slowly.*)

CHORUS:

Awake, awake, put on thy strength, O Zion:
Put on thy beautiful garments, O Jerusalem, the holy city,
For ye shall go out with joy, and be led forth with peace:
The mountains and the hills shall break forth before you into singing,
And all the trees of the field shall clap their hands.

(*Music, instrumental. The Chorus descends to its former position.*)

I WATCHMAN: And the light shineth in the darkness.

II WATCHMAN: And the darkness comprehendeth it not.

(*The Watchmen beckoning from the turret greet the entering Wise Men.*)

I WISE MAN: Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him.

(*The Watchmen point to the door of the Stable. The Wise Men move slowly toward it. All eyes follow them until caught back by the entrance of the Angel leading the Shepherds down center aisle.*)

ANGEL (*with a scroll, standing on one of the elevations*): And

there were in the same country shepherds, abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night.

And lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them, and they were sore afraid.

I SHEPHERD: And the angel said, Fear not; for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people.

For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.

And this shall be a sign unto you: Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger.

(*The Star appears over the Stable.*)

II SHEPHERD: And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.

ANGEL (*as the Shepherds go toward door*): And it came to pass, as the angels were gone away from them into heaven, the shepherds said one to another, Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us.

(*All turn again toward the door. Music. The Angel goes to the door and stands in front of it. Four little Seraphim climb the steps, two on either side of the arch, kneel opposite each other, and speak in turn.*)

I SERAPH: And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn.

II SERAPH: And when they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceeding great joy.

III SERAPH: And lo, the star, which they saw in the east, went before them till it came and stood over where the young child was.

IV SERAPH: And they came with haste, and found Mary, and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger.

And all they that heard it wondered at those things which were told them.

ANGEL (*at the door*): But Mary kept all these things, and pondered them in her heart.

(*The Angel opens the door upon the Nativity tableau. Music during the tableau: When Man Was All Too Marred with Sin.*)

(*Chorale and Recessional: Now Let Every Tongue Adore Thee.*)

REFERENCES

Text: The Book of the Prophet Isaiah; the Book of Psalms; the Gospels according to Saint Luke and according to Saint John. The text was arranged by Katharine Taylor.

Music: 1. Kol Nidre (played by violin, cello and piano as prelude to play, and repeated in part for entrance of Chorus): Songs of Israel, compiled and arranged for piano by Martin Greenwald, Academic Music Co., New York. Any simple adaptation of this for violin and cello is better than the ornate arrangements.

2. The Lord of All. Old Hebrew Melody, in Junior Laurel Songs, Teachers' Edition; published by C. C. Birchard and Co., Boston, Mass.

3. Sing unto the Lord a New Song. These words were fitted to the tune P'sach Lonu Sha-ar, found in Volume I of Famous Traditional Hebrew Melodies, compiled and arranged for piano by Martin Greenwald; published by the Academic Music Co., New York.

4. Awake, awake. These words were fitted to the tune Essa Dei, in Volume I of Famous Traditional Hebrew Melodies; the same music was used instrumentally during the Chorus's ascending and descending of the steps.

5. Piano Music for entrance of Seraphs. The tune Useshuwoh, in Volume I of Famous Traditional Hebrew Melodies.
6. When Man was all too Marred with Sin. Twenty-five Chorales by John Sebastian Bach, edited by Berta Elsmith and Thomas Whitney Surette; published by E. C. Schirmer Music Co., 221 Columbus Ave., Boston, Mass. Price $0.60.
7. Now Let Every Tongue Adore Thee. Twenty-five Chorales by John Sebastian Bach.

THE SHEPHERDS

We have found the English Mystery Plays unfit for representation *in toto* at Christmas exercises. For twentieth century audiences and children, their repetitions and the coarseness of their peasants' wit seem incongruous. Yet the York Nativity play and the Coventry, Towneley and Chester Shepherd plays contain such charming scenes, they are filled with lines of such beauty, that we cannot set them aside. We have taken excerpts from one and another of these plays, and have fitted them together into a new Play whose mood our children enjoy and seem able to express.

As described in the introduction, the stage set for this play is in three parts.* The middle part is a shallow walk (No. 1 boxes) in front of a stable, the two sides at an obtuse angle to the back, rising, one to a little hill on the left, the other to a rocky elevation on the right.

The action is unhurried throughout. During the brief introductory music, the shepherds slip quietly onto the almost dark stage. The First and Second Shepherds climb the hill to the left. The Third Shep-

* See cut on page ~~xix~~ xx

herd and the Boy climb the rocky cliff to the right. All four settle down, reclining against the rocks or lying flat on the hillside. Falling asleep, they seem in the dimness part of the scenery. When Joseph and Mary enter they are seen mainly in silhouette, on the narrow platform in front of the stable. They are looking only for a place to rest, and do not see the shepherds.

In the scene of the Nativity, the composition, as we worked it out, is almost formally symmetrical. Mary and Joseph avoid every needless shift in position, as the three Shepherds and the Boy come, one by one, to kneel at the manger and present their gifts, —a hood, a reed pipe, a little bird and a bob of cherries.

Then all the actors stand. Facing forward, they join with the whole school in singing a Chorale; after which they go out, in procession, through the audience.

From the beginning of the play to the end, the lighting changes, in a very gradual crescendo, from the cold and extreme dimness of night to warmer and brighter tones. This crescendo, however, has hardly begun when Joseph returns from his search for fuel, and sees a miraculous light shining through the cracks around the stable door. When he pushes the door back (we arranged it to slide in an overhead groove and on silent rollers below), his figure is silhouetted against the amber light shining up out of the manger.

There is a suggestion of false dawn on the hill, to the left, when the shepherds wake. But that gradually subsides as they come down; and the scene is rather dark when the star appears.

The star is long-pointed, conventional, cut out of cardboard, and silvered. Fixed just above the hole in the thatched stable-roof, it is visible throughout the play; but is brilliantly seen only when struck by a shaft of white light. This is easily supplied by a bulb, suspended from the ceiling in a long tube, and controlled from the switchboard.

When the star has finally lost its radiance, the brightness and warmth of the lighting increases steadily to the golden brilliancy of morning at the end.

Just before the play began, the upper grades of the school sang the whole of A Shepherd upon a Hill He Sat and O Leave Your Sheep, to put us all into the mood of the play. Before Scene I, there is quiet piano music while shepherds take their places. The chorus in the songs is a group of older children sitting inconspicuously on the floor near the stage. Before Scene II, the Chorus sings without accompaniment one verse of A Shepherd upon a Hill He Sat. Immediately following this, the Second Shepherd plays a phrase or two on his pipes. Some simple instrument, such as an ocarina, can be played by the shepherd. Or a flute may be played off stage. In the middle of Scene II, when the shepherds see a light in the heavens and hear music, Gloria Patri (Palestrina) is sung very softly by the chorus, without accompaniment. At the end of Scene II, as they come slowly down from the hill and around to the stable, one verse of O Leave Your Sheep, an old French carol, is either sung or played.

At the very end of the play, while the stable door still remains open, the shepherds face the audience.

At the words "To sing we are bound" the school stands and sings Bach's Chorale, Break Forth, O Beauteous Heavenly Light. When the stable door is closed the chorale is immediately repeated by the piano as a recessional.

As for costuming, Joseph is dressed in neutral mauve and reddish brown shades, Mary in a dark blue cloak with wine-colored gown beneath; the shepherds in earthy colors—greens, tans, browns, orange; the costume of the angel, copied from a Fra Angelico painting, is a straight, slim, heavy gown of copper or flame color, with cardboard wings painted brilliantly in clear design. There is no white in any of the costumes.

THE SHEPHERDS

Characters

JOSEPH
MARY
FIRST SHEPHERD
SECOND SHEPHERD
THIRD SHEPHERD
BOY
ANGEL

THE SHEPHERDS

Scene I

(Bethlehem, before the stable. The Shepherds, to quiet piano music, have entered and taken their places on the two hills, where they remain motionless, asleep, throughout Scene I. Mary and Joseph enter, R.)

JOSEPH:

All-wielding God in heaven that be,
I pray thee, Lord, for thy great might,
Unto thy simple servant see,
Here in this place and in such plight,
Ourself alone;
Grant us good harboring this night
Within this wone.

For we have sought both up and down
Through all the streets of this city;
So mekill people is comen to town
That we can no where harbored be,
It is such press.
Forsooth I can no succour see,
But bide with beasts.

And if we here all night abide,
The storm shall reach us in this stead;

The walls are down on every side,
The roof is torn above our head,
As have I roo.
Say, Mary, daughter, what is thy rede?
How shall we do?

MARY:

God will us guide, full well wit ye;
Therefore, Joseph, be of good cheer.
Now in my soul great joy have I,
I am all clad in comfort clear.
He will be born
That shall us save from sorrows sere
Both even and morn.

JOSEPH:

Then behooves us bide here still,
Here in this same place this night.

MARY:

Yea, sire, forsooth it is God's will.

JOSEPH:

Then would I fain we had some light,
Whatso befall;
It waxes mirk unto my sight
And cold withall.
I will forthwith go find a light,
And fuel seek with me to bring.

MARY:

All-wielding God you guide aright,
As he is sovereign of all thing
For his great might;
And lend me grace to his loving
That I me dight.

(Joseph goes out, L., Mary enters stable at its open end, R., its center door remaining closed.)

(*Mary's voice is heard within the stable, where a light shines forth through the hole in the broken roof.*)

MARY:

Hail my Lord God, hail Prince of light,
Hail God who comes, in earth to be.
Hail sovereign Sonë through whose might
All this world began to be:
Grant me Thy bliss,
As I am Thy mother chosen to be
In soothfastness.

(*Joseph returns, L., with an armful of wood.*)

JOSEPH:

Ah, Lord, how the weather is cold!
The fellest frost that ever I feeled.
I pray God help them that is old
And namely them that is unwield—
So may I say.
Now, good God, Thou be my shield
As Thou best may.

Ah, Lord God, what light is this
That comes shining suddenly?
I cannot say, as I have bliss.
When I come home unto Mary
Then shall I see.

(*Joseph draws open the center door of the stable. Mary is seated behind a low manger from which the light shines. She holds the child on her lap. An ox and an ass bend over the manger on either side.*)

JOSEPH:

Say, Mary, daughter, what cheer with thee?
Me marvels mekill of this light
That thus shineth in this place—
Forsooth it is a wondrous sight.

MARY:

This hath He workëd of His grace,
My son so young:
A star to be shining here a space
Where He is born.

JOSEPH:

Now welcome, flower fairest of hue!
I shall Thee worship with main and might.
Hail my Maker, hail Christ Jesu,
Thou royal King, Root of all Right.
Hail Saviour,
Hail my Lord, Maker of Light,
Hail blessed flower.

MARY:

Now Lord, that all this world shall win,
To Thee, my Son, is that I say:
Here was no bed to lay Thee in,
Therefore, my dear Son, I thee pray,
Since it was so,
Here in this crib I must Thee lay
Between these beastës two.
(*Mary lays the Child in the manger.*)

JOSEPH:

Mary, behold these beastës mild!
They loving make in their manner,
As they were men;
Forsooth, it seems to be their cheer
Their Lord they ken.

MARY:

Their Lord they ken, that wot I well;
They worship Him with might and main.
The weather is cold, as ye may feel;
They breathe on Him, on nought was lain
To warm Him with.

To hold Him warm they are full fain,
With their warm breath.
Now sleeps my Son, blest may He be,
And lies full warm the beasts between.

JOSEPH:

Honour and worship, both day and night,
All-lasting Lord, be done to Thee
As is worthy.
And to Thy service I bind me
With heart wholly.

MARY:

Thou merciful Maker most mighty,
My God, my Lord, my Son so free,
Thy handmaiden forsooth am I,
And to Thy service I bind me
With my heart whole.
Thy blessing now beseech I Thee
Grant to us all.

(*Joseph closes the center door and enters the stable at its open end, R.*)

SCENE II

(*Song, by a small chorus seated near the stage: The Shepherd upon a Hill He Sat.—Hills near Bethlehem. The shepherds are resting after searching for their sheep in the darkness. First and Second Shepherds are on hill, L.; Third Shepherd and Boy, who have lost their way, are on hill, R. They slowly waken, and the Second Shepherd plays a few phrases on his pipes.*)

FIRST SHEPHERD:

God save my fellows now and me,
For I know not where my sheep they be,
This night it is so cold;
The weather is dark and dim of light,

That of them can I have no sight
Standing here on this wold.

But now to make their heartës light,
Now will I full right
Stand upon this looe
And to them cry with all my might;
Full well my voice they know,
What ho! fellows! hoo! hoo!
(*Third Shepherd and Boy hear the call.*)

THIRD SHEPHERD:
Haloo! Haloo!

SECOND SHEPHERD:
Hark, friend, hark, I hear our brother;
This is his voice, right well I know;
Therefore to find him let us go,
And follow his voice aright.
(*Third Shepherd and Boy descend from their hill, cross in front of stable and meet First and Second Shepherds.*)

FIRST SHEPHERD:
Brother, where hast thou been so long,
And it so cold this night?

THIRD SHEPHERD:
O friends, there came a whirl of wind,
With a mist suddenly,
So that my way I could not find,
And was full sore afright.
Then forth must I go, I knew not whither,
But travelled on this looe hither and thither,
Till near was past my might.

SECOND SHEPHERD:
Brother, now we be past that fright
And it is far within the night;
Full soon will spring the dayës light,
It draweth full near betide.

Here awhile then let us rest
Till that the sun rise in the east;
Let us all here abide.

(*They all climb the hill, L., and settle themselves there to rest. A star appears over the stable, shining intermittently. There is faint music: Gloria Patri. The First Shepherd is startled.*)

FIRST SHEPHERD:

Brother, look up and behold
What thing is yonder, shineth bright?
As long as ever I've watched my fold
Yet saw I never such a sight.

THIRD SHEPHERD:

Saw I never such marvél
Shapen upon the skies;
It is brighter than the sunnës beam,
It cometh over all this realm,
Even above Bethlehem—
I saw it burnë thrice!

(*During this speech the starlight has vanished.*)

SECOND SHEPHERD:

A glory and a glare,
Yet no man was near
Within our sight!

THIRD SHEPHERD:

Yes, it was a glory—
But more, a song.

BOY:

Of this strange story
I would have more anon.

(*Music. An Angel appears on the peak of the hill, R., and speaks to them, and after speaking vanishes. The star returns and shines steadily until the end.*)

ANGEL:

Rise, ye herdsmen, arise,
For now is He born.
God is made your friend
Now at this morn.
To Bethlehem go see:
There lieth thy Lord
In a crib, full poorly,
Betwixt two beastës lies He.

SECOND SHEPHERD:

This was as quaint a voice
As ever I heard.

THIRD SHEPHERD:

Some marvel there be.
Of God's son of heaven
From above he hath spoken.

FIRST SHEPHERD:

He spoke of a bairn
In Bethlehem.

SECOND SHEPHERD:

Then that betokens yond star!

BOY:

Let us seek Him there!

THIRD SHEPHERD:

Full glad may we be
And abide that day,
Him lovely to see
That holds all in His sway.

Lord, well for me,
For once and for aye,
Might I kneel on my knee
Some word for to say
To that child.

But the angel said
In a crib was He laid,
He was poorly arrayed,
Both meek and mild.

FIRST SHEPHERD:

Patriarchs that have been
And prophets beforn,
They desired to have seen
This child that is born;
We shall see Him, I ween,
Ere it be morn.

SECOND SHEPHERD:

When see Him I shall,
Then know I full well
It is true as steel
That prophets have spoken,
To so poor as we are
That He would appear.

FIRST SHEPHERD:

Go we now, let us fare.
First find, then declare.

THIRD SHEPHERD:

Lord, if Thy will be,
We are simple all three;
Thou grant us Thy glee
Our comfort to be.

(*They start forth, climbing slowly up over the hill and down. Instrumental or choral music: O Leave Your Sheep.*)

Scene III

(*The Shepherds arrive at the stable in Bethlehem. As they approach, Joseph appears from end door, R., and slowly opens the center door.*)

First Shepherd:

Let us do Him homage.

Second Shepherd:

Who shall go first?

Third Shepherd:

Ye be father of age,
Therefore ye must go first.

First Shepherd:

Hail King of heaven so high,
Born in a crib.

Third Shepherd:

Hail comely and clean,
Hail young child,
Hail born, as I mean,
Of a maiden so mild.

First Shepherd:

For to give Thee have I no thing,
Neither gold, silver, brooch nor ring,
Nor no rich robes meet for a king,
To maintain Thy royal dignity,
But this my hood,—then take it to Thee.
(*He kneels.*)

Second Shepherd:

Alas! what have I for Thee
Save only my pipe?
Were I among my own rockës there,
I could play this pipe
So that all the wood should ring
And quiver as it were.
(*He kneels.*)

BOY:

Lo He merry is,
Lo He laughs, my sweeting;
A fair, fair meeting.
I have given my greeting—
Here's a bob of cherries.
(*He kneels.*)

THIRD SHEPHERD:

Hail sovereign saviour,
For Thou hast us sought,
Hail noble child, flower
That all things hath wrought,
That made all of nought.
A bird have I brought
From far,
Little day star.
(*He kneels.*)

MARY:

He keep you from woe!
I shall pray Him so.
Tell forth as ye go,
And mind on this morn.

FIRST SHEPHERD:

Farewell, babe and bairn of bliss,
Farewell, Lord that lovely is;
Thee to worship Thy feet I kiss;
On knees to Thee I fall.
All this world have joy of Thee;
Farewell, King of all.

JOSEPH:

Herds from the hill,
Be ye not still
But speak at your will
To many a man:

How God is born
This merry morn.
(*At Joseph's first words the Shepherds rise. At the end of his speech, they all turn to face the audience.*)

SECOND SHEPHERD:

We shall all tell
By dale and height
How that the Lord
Was born this night.

THIRD SHEPHERD:

Forsooth, already it seems
To be told full oft.

BOY:

What joy we have found!

THIRD SHEPHERD:

To sing we are bound!
Let us sing it on loft!
(*Music: Break Forth, O Beauteous Heavenly Light.*)

REFERENCES

Text: The four plays from which The Shepherds was composed are all in early English cycles of plays: The York Nativity Play formed the first scene; the second and third scenes were composed from lines in the Coventry Adoration of the Shepherds, The Towneley Second Shepherds Play, and The Chester Adoration of the Shepherds. As far as possible the original lines were used, with wording and spelling modernized. The text was arranged by Katharine Taylor.

1. York Plays, Lucy Toulmin Smith, ed.: Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1885.
2. Ludus Coventriae, J. O. Halliwell, ed.: printed for the Shakespeare Society, London, 1841.
3. The Towneley Plays, George England, ed.: published for the Early English Text Society, by Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner & Co., London, 1897.

4. The Chester Plays, Thomas Wright, ed.: printed for the Shakespeare Society, London, 1843.

Music: 1. Before Scene I, while the Shepherds take their places: Que ce nouveau-né (first 4 measures played on piano), found in 40 Noëls Anciens, by Léon Roques; obtainable from E. C. Schirmer Music Co., 221 Columbus Avenue, Boston, Mass.

2. The Shepherd upon a Hill He Sat: Words, 15th century English, are printed below, very slightly modified to fit the music. Tune: In dulce jubilo, 14th century; obtainable from E. C. Schirmer, Boston.
3. Gloria Patri, for double chorus, by Palestrina (first 16 measures sung by small chorus, as star appears). Edited by Frank Damrosch, published by G. Schirmer, New York, $0.08.
4. Instrumental music: a. As Angel ascends—Entrez, dévote compagnie (last 8 measures). b. As Angel descends—Que ce nouveau-né (last 8 measures); both found in 40 Noëls Anciens, by Léon Roques.
5. At end of Scene II, as the Shepherds journey to the stable: O Leave Your Sheep, Old French carol, Concord Hymnal, published by E. C. Schirmer, Boston.
6. Break Forth, O Beauteous Heavenly Light, by Bach, sung by the whole school, and repeated by the piano as a recessional for the school; obtainable from E. C. Schirmer, Boston.

Words of The Shepherd upon a Hill He Sat (as used for singing):

The shepherd upon a hill he sat;
He had on him his tabard and hat,
Tarbox, pipe, and his flagat;
His name was callëd Joly Wat.
He was a good herdsboy, ut hoy,
For in his pipe he made so much joy,
Ut hoy, ut hoy, ut hoy,
He made so much joy.

THE SHEPHERDS

The shepherd upon a hill he stood;
Round about him his sheep they yode.
He put his hand up to his hood,
He saw a star as red as blood.
He saw a star, ut hoy, ut hoy,
For in his pipe he made so much joy,
Ut hoy, ut hoy, ut hoy,
He made so much joy.

The Shepherd said: "Anon aright,
I go to see yon wondrous sight,
The angel singeth on height,
Whereof the star that shineth bright,
The star that shineth bright, ut hoy."
For in his pipe he made so much joy,
Ut hoy, ut hoy, ut hoy,
He made so much joy.

"Now must I go where Christ was born;
Farewell, I come again to-morn;
Dog, keep well my sheep from the corn,
Warn warroke when I blow my horn,
And warn them well, ut hoy, ut hoy."
For in his pipe he made so much joy,
Ut hoy, ut hoy, ut hoy,
He made so much joy.

"Jesu, I give to thee my pipe,
My cloak, my tarbox, and my scrip;
Home to my fellows will I skip,
And also look unto my sheep,
And look unto my sheep, ut hoy."
For in his pipe he made so much joy,
Ut hoy, ut hoy, ut hoy,
He made so much joy.

"Now may I well both leap and sing
For I have been at Christ's bearing;
Home to my sheep now will I fling.
Christ of Heaven to bliss us bring,
Christ to bliss us bring, ut hoy!"
In his pipe he made so much joy,
Ut hoy, ut hoy, ut hoy,
He made so much joy.

tabard: smock
ut hoy: a shepherd's call
warroke: guard
yode: went
scrip: leather pouch
tarbox: part of the shepherd's kit
to-morn: tomorrow
flagat: flask
fling: rush

SIGURD THE VOLSUNG

Our play of Sigurd the Volsung grew naturally out of our school work. After studying the break-up of Charlemagne's Empire, and the Norsemen's raids along the Frankish coast, the seventh grade read the story of Sigurd in the Icelandic Völsunga Saga, translated by William Morris. We chose the Icelandic version of the story because it is simpler than any Teutonic derivation and more powerfully and directly phrased. While reading it the class acted various scenes; and finally chose certain of the songs, scattered through the saga, as material for a play. Planning a single picture, rather than a chronicle, they picked out the songs about Sigurd's riding through the flames to wake Brynhild; and as the songs left gaps in the story, groups of children wrote new songs whose style the class, as a whole, polished and adapted to the rest.

The Sigurd composed in this way was perforce a scene rather than a play, and a scene so much more lyric than dramatic that music was needed to carry it along. Passages from the Walküre, Siegfried and the Götterdämmerung were an obvious choice. Though only a piano was available, the astonishing picture-

making quality of Wagner's music survived the absence of his orchestra, and the fire music, for instance, gave life to a symbolic dance of flames which without it would have been just the material side of a symbol, meaningless and dead.

Our stage set for Sigurd centered in a conventionalized hill consisting of steps which climbed right and left, over an archway, to a shallow platform, or ledge—the same steps (made of No. 3 boxes) and the same arch that framed the Nativity in The Prophets.* In front of the arch, however, we added an approach on each side (of No. 1 and No. 3 boxes).

The action developed from the text in relation to this simple stage set. Odin and Brynhild climbed the approaches, right and left, and mounted later to the upper ledge where Odin left Brynhild to her magic sleep. The flames burst through the arch below, and surged about the base of the hill and part way up each side. At the door of the hall, Sigurd, whose outdoor approach had been visible to the audience through a window, dismounted from his steed (a living concession to realism), and made his way through the audience to the hill. He strode through the flames, climbed to the ledge, and waked Brynhild by cutting off her coat of chain armor with his sword. During Sigurd and Brynhild's dialogue the music wove itself through and around her runes. And when they parted it foretold his triumph as she watched him out of sight.

The Flames, of course, were children dressed in soft and streaming ragged tunics, orange, yellow and red. Their action in bursting through the arch and envelop-

* See Introduction.

ing the base of the hill was suggested chiefly by sound. Wagner's fire music was played again and again, in rehearsal, till the Flames tuned themselves to it and Flames and music became, as nearly as may be, one.

We have suggested the Flames' costumes. As for the speaking characters, Odin wore a helmet (of silvered cardboard) with raven's wings, and a long, cloud-gray cloak. Brynhild's helmet was white-winged. She wore a coat, or byrnie, of chain mail through which the blue of her tunic showed. Sigurd, with a gray-winged helmet, wore over a dull red tunic a byrnie of chain mail.

SIGURD THE VOLSUNG

Characters

ODIN
BRYNHILD
SIGURD
THE FLAMES

SIGURD THE VOLSUNG

(*Music:* Walküre, Act III, Scene 3, first 21 measures, pp. 176-77. Enter Odin and Brynhild after 9 measures.*)

ODIN:

Come, Brynhild,
My wrath hast thou roused
By dealing with fate and her changeless doom.
No more, O Brynhild,
Shalt thou carry the dead,
The warriors famed for their valor in war.

BRYNHILD:

Odin, my father,
Punish me not.
Give me the freedom of days of old.
The brave, whom the fates condemned to be killed,
Was young and was comely.
The other was hoary,
Weak was his spear-hold.
But Agnar could battle still,
Follow the whale-path;
It smote on my heart
To see that brave die.

*The page references in the music refer to the editions quoted in list of references for this play.

Pity me then,
Odin, Allfather,
Spare me I pray.

ODIN:

Thou hast done wrong.
The fates give no pardon.
Go down to the earth and share its sorrows.
Thou com'st from the sons of men.
Go you to them again,
Live with them, wed them, die in the end.
(*Music as Odin turns and starts to climb the hill. Walküre, Act III, Scene 3, p. 182, last 3 measures and first on p. 183.*)

BRYNHILD:

If I must
With a mortal wed
And no more swoop to the battle's shock,
Let only a warrior
Have me to wife,
One who is fearless, the hardiest of men.
(*Music. Walküre, Act III, Scene 1, p. 158. Siegfried motif, 7 measures.*)

ODIN:

Thou wert my favorite,
So shall it be.
In a high hall thou shalt sleep.
I will put
My fierce fire about thee.
Around thy hall bright flames shall leap.
None but a fearless
Man can pass,
A God-like mortal he must be.
(*Music as Odin leads Brynhild to the crest of the hill and begins to put her to sleep. Walküre, Act III, Scene*

3, p. 199. Sleep motif, 8 measures continuing through the following speech.)

ODIN:

In your breast be the sleep thorn.
Sleep! till he comes.

(Music as above, p. 200. Farewell motif as Odin descends, 5 measures ending in a loud chord as he strikes the ground with his staff. Fire music, pp. 201-203. Flames stream out, surround the hill, surge up and back, then begin burning steadily. Odin watches, then goes out.)

FLAMES:

Soft on the fell
A shield-maid sleepeth,
The lime trees' red plague
Playing about her:
The sleep thorn set Odin
Into that maiden,
For her choosing in war
The one he willed not.
From her may not turn
The torment of sleep
Till he who is fearless
Comes seeking her wisdom.

(Music as Sigurd rides up from without, enters and approaches the flames. Siegfried, Act III, Scene 2, p. 271, 12 measures; p. 269, 3 measures.)

SIGURD:

The flame wall is mighty!
Yet I must go through
If I would find wisdom.

(Music as Sigurd draws his sword and leaps through the Flames. Siegfried, Act III, Scene 2, p. 280, last 2 measures and first 6 on p. 281. The Flames draw back and disappear and Sigurd climbs to where Brynhild is

lying. With his sword he cuts her armor. Music: Siegfried, Act III, Scene 3, p. 289. Sword motif, 10 measures. Brynhild wakes.)

BRYNHILD:

What bit on the byrnie,
What breaks my sleep away?
Who has turned from me
My wan tormenting?

SIGURD:

Sigmund's son
With Sigurd's sword
E'en now rent down
The raven's wall.

BRYNHILD:

Long have I slept
And slumbered long,
Many and long are the woes of mankind.
By the might of Odin
Must I bide helpless
To shake from off me the spells of slumber.

Hail to the day come back!
Hail, sons of the daylight!
Hail to thee, dark night and thy daughter!
Look with kind eyes adown
On us sitting here lonely,
And give unto us the gain that we long for.

SIGURD:

Teach me the lore
Of mighty matters!

(*Music as they descend and sit, Brynhild above Sigurd, on the slope of the hill. Siegfried, Act III, Scene 3, p. 318, the 6 measures preceding the last line. As Brynhild begins to tell the runes, music accompanies her softly all*

through: p. 318, last 6 measures, p. 319, repeating as much as is needed.)

BRYNHILD:

Runes of war know thou
If great thou wilt be!
Cut them on hilt of hardened sword,
Some on the brand's back,
Some on its shining side,
Twice name Tyr therein.

Sea-runes good at need
Learnt for ships' saving,
For the good health of the swimming horse;
On the stern cut them,
Cut them on the rudder-blade
And set flame to shaven oar:
Howso big be the sea-hills,
Howso blue beneath,
Hale from the main then comest thou home.

Learn the bough-runes' wisdom
If leech-lore thou lovest;
And wilt wot about wounds' searching.
On the bark be they scored,
On the buds of trees
Whose boughs look eastward ever.

These be the book-runes
And runes of good help.
They are wholesome to have,
Thrive thou with these then,
When thou hast learnt their lore,
Till the Gods end thy life days.
(*Music stops.*)

SIGURD:

Surely thou art
The wisest of women.
Teach me even more of thy lays.
(*Music begins.*)

BRYNHILD:

If thou hearest the ignorant
Or the drunk or the witless
Say the fool's word,
Strive not with them.
They know not what they say.
Many a grief,
Yea, the very death,
Comes from such folly.
Be kindly unto
Friend and kin.
And if he wrongs thee
Avenge it not.
Bear and forbear.
(*Music stops. Brynhild stands.*)
Now shalt thou choose thee,
E'en as choice is bidden,
Sharp steel's root and stem.

SIGURD:

Ne'er shall I flee
Though thou wottest me fey.
Never was I born for blenching.
Thy loved rede will I
Hold aright in my heart
Even as long as I shall live.
(*Sigurd turns and strides out. Music: Götterdämmerung: Siegfried's Funeral March. The first 4 measures of the Tromba part, p. 213, measures 3-7, continuing if necessary as Brynhild watches and then goes out, but repeating the first 4 measures as a finale.*)

REFERENCES

Text: The Icelandic Völsunga Saga, translated by William Morris; published by the Walter Scott Publishing Co., London.

Music: Richard Wagner, Die Walküre; Schott's edition. Richard Wagner, Götterdämmerung; Schott's edition. Richard Wagner, Siegfried, 1904 edition, published by E. C. Schirmer Music Co., 221 Columbus Ave., Boston, Mass.

DEUS VOLT: GOD WILLS IT

This play shows us the First Crusade as children of our seventh grade imagined it to themselves after studying contemporary sources. It is not a play in the old-fashioned sense: it develops no crisis to be untangled at the end. More modern in its unconscious method, it simply presents us with three scenes: Scene I: In a castle hall near Clermont; the Baron's family at home; pilgrims from the Holy Land bringing tragic news; the Baron returning from Clermont where Pope Urban has just preached the First Crusade to multitudes crying, "Deus Volt: God Wills It." Scene II: Outside a town wall on the endless road through Asia Minor; soldiers, their women and children; thirst, sickness and death; boys playing at war; the soldiers called to repel an attack. Scene III: The castle again; the Baron's wife and family "carrying on"; a message at last that Jerusalem is taken, and the Baron journeying home; the lady of the castle calling her people to feast. In these pictures, the play embodies the spirit of the Crusade, and embodies it with all the more life because the successive scenes are connected in meaning rather than by a plot.

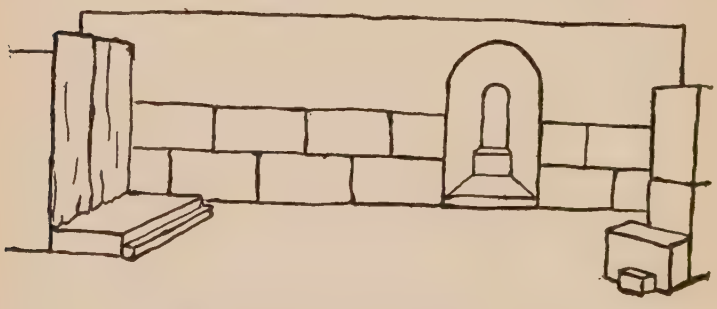
The children who wrote the play had studied the Crusaders' journey and the attack on Jerusalem, in the account written by Raymond du Puy who accompanied the leader of the Provençal forces, Raymond de St. Gilles, Count of Toulouse; they had studied parts of the Gesta Dei per Francos, that history of the Crusade written contemporaneously by Guibert de Nogent; and they had read Arabic stories of certain events on the way. From these sources they drew such incidents as the Armenian's merciless bargaining for food, the children's mock battle (Scene II) and the Baron's account of fighting through the streets of Jerusalem (Scene III). They took the Arrowhead Charm (Scene II) from A. S. Cook's "Literary Middle English Reader."

Groups of children in the seventh grade built the play. The teacher suggested changes here and there, and the addition of two or three speeches. The rehearsals brought out roughnesses that had to be polished off. Thus the acting version reached its present form.

The only music was a Provençal troubadour song, sung at the beginning of Scene I by a minstrel. The song chosen was the twelfth century Kalenda Maya. Though of later date than the First Crusade, it seemed more nearly in character with the scene than any earlier songs that were available.

The stage sets suggested the three scenes by the simplest of means. A wall of No. 1 boxes across the back of the stage stood unchanged throughout the play. It was pierced left center by a deep-set, round-arched window (built like the cloister recesses in Our

Lady's Tumbler). In Scene I, a diagonal dais on the right was approached by steps on which the boy sat, at the opening of the play, when singing his song. Entrances right and left were masked by screens. This indoor castle set, for Scene I, was transformed into Scene II by masking the central window with a wide piece of canvas hanging from the top to the bottom of the wall; and by erecting an open shelter to the



right. This was simply a strip of canvas, about four feet wide, fastened to the floor (at the dais of Scene I) and supported at the front corners by two poles. The whiteness of this bit of canvas, and especially of the canvas covering the wall, was enough to suggest the scorching sunlight and plastered walls of the East. For Scene III, it was necessary, of course, only to remove the canvases which had transformed Scene I into Scene II. The canvases were shifted by two soldiers when the other characters had left the stage.

The costumes may easily be imagined. The Eastern dress of the period was suggested by photographs of Arabic miniatures; the French by photographs of early bas-reliefs. The Crusaders' chain armor was made

of burlap horizontally streaked with aluminum radiator paint.

The lighting, as described in the introduction, was by modified daylight.

The sincerity of the acting, the genuine material, and the all-pervading method of suggestion as contrasted with literal representation, carried the audience, grown-ups as well as children, unquestionably into the days of the First Crusade.

DEUS VOLT: GOD WILLS IT

Characters

LADY HÉLÈNE
BARON LETHOLD, *her husband*
ELIZABETH, *her daughter*
RICHARD, *her son*
ROBERT, *a peasant*
MARIE, *his wife*
PIERRE AND RAOUL, *peasants*
HARRY, *a smith*
TWO OTHER PEASANTS
A PILGRIM
AN ARMENIAN
A SARACEN DOCTOR
A FRANKISH LEECH
RAYMOND, *a child*
OTHER CHILDREN
A KNIGHT
A TRAVELER
SERVANTS
A MINSTREL

DEUS VOLT

Scene I

(*A castle in France near Clermont. Lady Hélène, Elizabeth and Marie, Robert's wife, sewing. Richard is lying listening to a Minstrel singing. The song is interrupted by the ringing of the big castle bell. The peasant woman rises and looks out of the window.*)

Lady Hélène: Someone must be coming.

Marie: My Lady, there is a pilgrim in the courtyard.

Lady Hélène: Do thou go and let him in.

(*Richard and Elizabeth go to window.*)

Richard: Oh, I hope he comes from Compostella!

Elizabeth: He might come from LePuy. That is the nearest, and most of the pilgrims come from there.

Lady Hélène: Wears he a shell on his hat?

Elizabeth: No. Mayhap he comes from Jerusalem.

Richard: Oh no, pilgrims from Jerusalem never come here.

Pilgrim (*enters L. and bows*): I, with ten other pilgrims, have been turned away from Jerusalem.

(*Enter Baron, R., followed by Robert, Pierre, and Raoul.*)

Lady Hélène: Ah, there is my lord Baron back from Clermont. Welcome, my lord. Here is a pilgrim——

Richard (*interrupts*): He has really seen Jerusalem, and stood in the center of the earth!

Baron: Is this true, holy pilgrim?

PILGRIM: Yes, my lord, it is true. Hideous men with arms of iron guard the gate, and would not let us enter. As we went through Palestine we met pilgrims who told us that we could not enter Jerusalem. We pushed forward in spite of this warning until we came upon a rising from which we knew we could see Jerusalem. We rushed up this slope. Peret saw the city first, and it was truly a dazzling sight, nearly blinding us. But when we got to the gate we were stopped by armed Saracens. We realized then that we could not gain entrance, so we turned sadly back and wended our way homewards.

BARON: Yes, I have just heard Pope Urban speak. All the Knights from hundreds of miles around were there. He told us how the city of Our Lord is in the hands of infidels who will not let the pilgrims enter. (*Pause*) I have decided to go, with thousands of others, on the crusade.

LADY HÉLÈNE: Oh, then it is a pilgrimage to the Holy City? Then thou wilt be gone months, years?

BARON: No, Hélène, it is more than a pilgrimage. It is a march to the Holy City to drive out the infidels who now hold it.

LADY HÉLÈNE: Oh, Lethold, do not go. Thou wilt surely be killed.

BARON: I can take care of myself, Hélène, thou needst not fear.

RICHARD: Oh, may I go, too? Father, may I go, too?

BARON: No, Richard, thou art too young to bear arms, and thou must stay at home and take care of thy mother.

LADY HÉLÈNE: Thou wilt need retainers, but who can be spared, with the planting time coming on?

BARON: I shall take Robert (*Marie looks up, startled*) and Pierre, and perhaps Raoul. Harry the Smith is too old. As for the planting, Philippe must take care of that.

LADY HÉLÈNE: But with all the peasants gone, the castle will not be strong enough to withstand the forces of Baron Robert.

BARON: Baron Robert may go himself. Also, the Church will be able to protect thee from him.

LADY HÉLÈNE: What about the new building thou wert going to build, for storing the wheat from the upland pasture? There will not be enough men to finish it, and the wheat must stay out all winter.

BARON: We will not plant the upland pasture this year, so there will be no need of the building. Come, Hélène, my mind is made up.

LADY HÉLÈNE: Then thou must really go?

BARON: Yes. Dost thou not see that he would be a coward who stayed at home when the Church needs him?

LADY HÉLÈNE: Then I shall go with thee.

BARON: No, it is impossible for thee to go. Thou must stay at home and keep the estate in order. (*To Peasants*) Do you take the pilgrim to the fountain. (*Minstrel and Peasants go out with Pilgrim. Marie rises and follows.*) Now, Richard, come with me to see about thy colt. (*Baron and Richard go out.*)

LADY HÉLÈNE: How long these dreary months will be, without thy father and the men-folk.

ELIZABETH: But mother, thou wouldst not want him to stay home and be called coward just for thee.

LADY HÉLÈNE: Oh, no, I would not have him stay.

ELIZABETH: Let us not think of the dreary months ahead, for we have still to complete the tapestry of the life of Roland. If we do it as it was done at Baron Edouard's castle, it will take all the months that Father is away to finish it.

LADY HÉLÈNE (*putting arm around Elizabeth*): Mayhap—well, thou and I must go now and help thy father prepare for this journey. (*Lady Hélène and Elizabeth go out.*)

Scene II

(Part of Baron Lethold's camp in Asia Minor. Robert's wife Marie is lying under a rough shelter of a blanket propped up by sticks. Robert sits beside her. The crowd of peasants lingers in the background. Four children are playing near by.)

Marie: A miracle it will be if I live to see the Holy City. Ah, would God but lead us to a cool and flowing stream of water.

Robert: How I wish thou wert safe at home with Lady Hélène.

Peasant (*in crowd*): Thanks to God, here's food.

Marie: Some lucky man has a tender morsel. Dear Robert, my head is heated like a branding iron.

Robert: Thou must lie still while I look for food. (*Crosses stage. Armenian gets up from crowd.*)

Armenian: Here is food.

Robert: Ah! How much is it?

Armenian: Only three bezants.

Robert: But I have not three bezants. Here is one.

Armenian: No, I must have three.

Robert: But I have only one bezant.

Armenian: If you will give me that knife, I will give you some food.

Robert: But I cannot give you my knife. It is my only weapon.

Armenian: Then I will give you no food.

(*Marie moans.*)

Robert: Well, here is my knife. (*He and the Armenian make the exchange.*)

First Child (*getting up*): I am tired of playing this. I shall be Godfrey and lead you to war.

Children: No, thou shan't. I shall be Godfrey.

SECOND CHILD: I am the strongest. I shall be Godfrey. (*Marie groans.*)

ROBERT (*chasing children with stick*): Get ye gone, ye noisy braggarts. (*Returning to Marie, and offering food to her.*) With such tender morsels as these thou shalt yet live to see the Christians enter the Holy City.

MARIE (*eating*): Ah yes, but Robert, my head is still dizzy. I am dazed.

ROBERT: I will try a charm that my mother taught me when I was a little boy. (*Kneels and with great care lays arrowhead on woman's forehead.*) Come out, worm, with nine other little worms, out from the marrow into the bone, from the bone into the flesh, from the flesh into the skin, from the skin into this arrow. So be it, Lord. How dost thou feel now?

MARIE: No better. Canst thou get me a leech?

ROBERT: A leech! Where shall I get thee a leech?

MARIE (*calling to children*): Raymond!

RAYMOND: What is it?

MARIE: Come hither. See if thou canst find me a leech. (*Raymond goes out, and a Knight enters with Saracen prisoner.*)

ROBERT: There is a knight. Maybe he can get thee a leech. (*He follows the Knight.*) Canst thou get me a leech? My wife is suffering great pain.

KNIGHT: Perhaps this Saracen prisoner knows somewhat about doctoring.

SARACEN: Yes, I know doctoring. I learned it in Spain.

ROBERT: Dost thou work thy cures by Mahound?

SARACEN: No.

ROBERT: Then come. (*They approach Marie.*)

SARACEN: If I am to cure her I need my hands. (*The Knight unties the hands of the Saracen, who kneels beside Marie.*) Where is the pain?

MARIE: My head pains, and I suffer greatly from thirst.

SARACEN: Can anyone get this woman some water?

ALL: There is no water.

PEASANT IN CROWD: And if there were, I would not give her any.

SARACEN: I have a little wine. (*Holds flask to woman's lips.*) Do not eat garlic and mustard, for they are bad for a fever. Lie still and keep out of the midday sun.

KNIGHT: If thou hast finished, come with me. I cannot wait here in the sun all the day.

ROBERT: Saracen, thou art very kind. (*To Marie as Knight leaves with Saracen*) How feelest thou now?

(*Marie groans. Raymond enters with Frankish leech.*)

RAYMOND: Here is a leech.

ROBERT: But a Saracen doctor has just been here.

LEECH: What was he doing?

ROBERT: He advised my wife who is sick with a fever. He told her not to eat garlic and mustard. He told her to lie still and to keep out of the midday sun.

LEECH (*to Marie*): Thou must not trust a Saracen. How feelest thou?

MARIE: No better.

LEECH: The devil hath entered thy head. I shall have to shave it so that he may come out. (*He does so.*) How feelest thou?

MARIE: No better.

LEECH: Then I must cut a cross in thy head so that the devil shall come out. (*He does so and Marie shrieks and faints.*) She must have committed a crime in her day.

ROBERT: No! No! She has always been a good wife. (*The Baron and the Knight rush in.*)

BARON: To arms, to arms! The Saracens are attacking our camp. Come! My men! Help defend it! (*All start to rush out excepting Robert and Marie.*)

ROBERT: Children, come hither and help me to carry her to a place of safety. (*They start to drag her out. Knight turns back and comes up to Robert.*)

KNIGHT: Come, Robert, we need every able-bodied man! (*Pulls him away. The children drag Marie out.*)

SCENE III

(*In same castle as Scene I, three years after the time of Scene I. Lady Hélène, two Peasants, Elizabeth and Richard. Lady Hélène sits at the table with a chart before her while the peasants stand hat in hand in front of table. Elizabeth is busy about some sewing. Richard is in a corner, absorbed in a book.*)

LADY HÉLÈNE: Thou sayest that the Baron told thee the day before he went that thou mightst plant the section of the north field next to thy strip?

FIRST PEASANT: Yes, my Lady, the very morning before he went.

SECOND PEASANT: I was with Baron Lethold the morning he told thee about it. He said that I was to have that section and that thou wast to have the one below it.

FIRST PEASANT: The one below is full of rocks.

LADY HÉLÈNE: I see no mention of either one on this plan the Baron left me.

SECOND PEASANT: Wilt thou not give me permission to cultivate the upper strip?

FIRST PEASANT: But it is next my land.

LADY HÉLÈNE: I will send Philippe to-morrow morning to divide it evenly between you. Now ye may go. It is late.

FIRST PEASANT (*starting out*): It is truly mine. Thou hast no right to half of it!

SECOND PEASANT: It is not thine, it is mine! (*Peasants go out.*)

LADY HÉLÈNE (*rises, sighing*): Mayhap I shall make all the peasants jealous by this. Oh, I would that my lord Baron were here to decide these matters!

ELIZABETH: It is more than three years since he left. We have not even had a letter for a long time. I wish some word would come from him.

(*Enter Traveler.*)

TRAVELER: I came upon two men in the court who told me I might enter. Art thou the wife of Baron Lethold?

LADY HÉLÈNE (*startled*): Yes, stranger, what brings thee here?

TRAVELER: A soldier sailed from Joppa to Marseilles bearing this letter. I am traveling to Paris and I have brought it here as it is in my path. (*Gives letter to Lady*).

LADY HÉLÈNE (*eagerly*): Oh, it is from my beloved husband! You must stay this night at the castle. Elizabeth, go thou and call the household to hear this letter.

(*Elizabeth goes. Lady Hélène looks at the letter.*)

RICHARD: What news hast thou of the Crusaders? Hast thou seen any of the armies?

TRAVELER: Oh, yes, an army passed through Marseilles a few days ago. They were on their way to the Holy Land.

RICHARD: Were there any boys in the army?

TRAVELER: Very few. None of thine age.

RICHARD: Didst thou know that Saracens' swords were curved?

TRAVELER: Yes, I have one that a knight brought to me from the Holy Land. (*Enter Elizabeth and a few servants.*)

LADY HÉLÈNE (*to all*): The lord Baron is safe, and the golden city is won!

PEASANTS: Glory to God!

LADY HÉLÈNE: Listen, and I will read his letter.

"To my brave wife, children, squires and my loyal tenants, from Baron Lethold, a faithful follower of Christ—Greetings:

At last the goal of goals is won—Jerusalem, the divine city of our Lord Jesus Christ!"

ELIZABETH: Now he will start homeward soon, will he not, mother?

LADY HÉLÈNE: "The first attempt to take the city failed, for the lack of scaling ladders. About a hundred of our men were killed; but the enemy lost at least a thousand."

RICHARD: Oh, there must have been dead Saracens over the whole field!

LADY HÉLÈNE: Hush, Richard. (*Reads*) "We did not besiege the city again for a month. Our leaders caused this delay to build siege engines of which we were greatly in need. Our Robert and two others built a catapult."

HARRY: Yes, I have ever said Robert would be a good hand at twisting the ropes of a hurling machine.

LADY HÉLÈNE: "Then we started to attack Christ's city for the second time. My leader, Count Raymond, was one of the first to climb up the scaling ladders. I scrambled up the ladders, too, and hit right and left, throwing the bodies of the dead over the wall. Then I leaped down into the city and killed every unholy person I saw. We chased the curséd ones up to the temple of Solomon where we slaughtered them.—Rejoicing and exulting we feasted till we had had our fill.

"Of our number Pierre, Louis, Raoul, Gustave and Roger have lost their lives gloriously. (*Peasant woman turns and weeps. Others comfort her.*) Of the women only Robert's wife Marie died of a sickness in camp.

"How is Richard my son, and Elizabeth my dutiful daughter? Has Harry the smith finished the coat of mail for Richard? If he has not, tell him to do so."

HARRY: Aye, that is done, my lord Baron. Have no fear that Harry will forget Master Richard.

LADY HÉLÈNE: "Do not worry about me, dear wife. I do not

mean to stay here quarreling, as do my leaders. I am starting homeward as soon as I can secure my men and provisions, which will be in about six days. God bless you, my dear wife and children, and keep you safe till I return."

RICHARD: How soon will he be home then, mother?

LADY HÉLÈNE: I cannot tell, but God grant it be soon. Come, let us prepare for an evening of rejoicing. Go, Harry, and tell all the peasants on the estate to come in. (*Harry, servants and the Traveler go out.*)

ELIZABETH: Mother, this is the first great feast we've had for many months. How gay it will be! We should have a minstrel.

RICHARD: I shall be minstrel. (*Jumps on platform.*) I can sing, "When Charles our King for seven long years had been in Spain—"

LADY HÉLÈNE: Yes, Richard, do thou be minstrel and we shall all sing with thee to-night. Come, children. (*She puts her arms around them both. They all go out.*)

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ROLAND

In preparing for a play which, like this one, is based on the Song of Roland, we should keep in mind those expeditions, partly military, partly religious, which the great monastery at Cluny so actively encouraged not only to worship at the shrine of "Monsignor" Saint James at Compostella, but also to conquer lands from the Paynims in Spain. We should study the routes followed by these pre-crusading warriors and pilgrims, down through France, across the port or pass over the Pyrenees at Roncevaux, and westward along the rivers and through the mountains of Navarre and Castile to Compostella. And we should consider how these roads, and the continuing stream of pilgrims that sometimes actually choked them, were related to literature and art. In doing so we shall not only find French Romanesque churches (Fromista, in Navarre, for example) on the French road, as it was called in Spain; we shall find a school of sculpture growing up all along it; and we shall learn that the great epic, sung at the Anglo-Norman court, was almost certainly created and sung by minstrels on the same road, to hearten the warrior-pilgrims, many of

whom were our far-off Norman ancestors. To them the Song of Roland, read often ploddingly in American schools to-day, meant glory and salvation, for it showed them St. Michael of the Mount descending to the Pyrenean peak where Roland, wounded to death in his fight against the Saracens of Spain, knelt and gave his glove, in token of feudal fealty, to his archangelic lord. So in the legend and the song, although in fact of course Roland met his death fighting against the Basques at Roncevaux.

With some such background of information, the teacher of our sixth grade, which had been studying Charlemagne's Empire, took up these few main points with the class. They studied one main route through France toward Compostella; they became familiar with pictures of some of the churches still standing on the "Way of St. James"; they found that the Song of Roland was made and sung hundreds of years after the death of Roland and Charlemagne, and probably to spur on the warrior-pilgrims to fight the Saracens of Spain; and they perceived the contrasts between the historic Charlemagne and Roland whom they had been studying, and the legendary St. Roland and St. Charlemagne. With those ideas in mind the children of the sixth grade read the epic in an English translation by Isabel Butler.* They picked out the sequence of scenes which seemed to stand best for the story as a whole, and transferred the dialogue almost literally from the text. More a chronicle than a drama, the resulting play tells its story in outlines not unlike the leaded

* See reference list; these extracts are used by permission of, and by arrangement with, Houghton Mifflin Co.

contours of the windows of St. Roland and St. Charlemagne in the north aisle of the Choir at Chartres.

With a curtain background of neutral shade, the single stage set stood for three scenes. Just upstage from an entrance (front, right), was the fortified gate of the city of Saragossa, held by the Saracens: two towers (like those in Aucassin and Nicolette) united by a round arch (of beaver board). This gate and wall slanted diagonally out from the back of the stage. Between it and the center was a narrow interval of flat stage, representing a low-lying path from which highlands and mountains abruptly rose toward the pass of Roncevaux in the center. The mountains, No. 1 and 2 boxes, were piled to a height of 7 or 8 feet. A sheer cliff, left, gave Oliver a sight of approaching Saracens. Irregularities in the central massif provided a footing up and over the rocks for the riders of Scene II and for Roland when he climbed up to the pine in Scene IV. The whole central stage set suggested a sort of towering Giants' Causeway rather than literal Pyrenean peaks. Finally, on the left, wide, flat rocks (two No. 1 boxes, end to end, slanting diagonally out from the back of the stage, with others rising higher behind) formed an improvised throne for Charlemagne. This closed the half-ellipse of our triple scene, and provided a screened entrance, left.

The triple stage set not only provided the three scenes needed for (1) Charlemagne's council, (2) the traitor's embassy to King Marsila and (3) the battle ending in Roland's death; by its vigorous variety of levels and its heights it gave the illusion of distance to the journeys from Roncevaux down into Spain and

back; it made possible the Frankish assaults carried with a rush up through the pass of Roncevaux; it inspired such action as that of the scene in which Roland tried in vain to break his sword Durendal against the rocks, and at last fell forward over it at the Archangel Gabriel's feet.

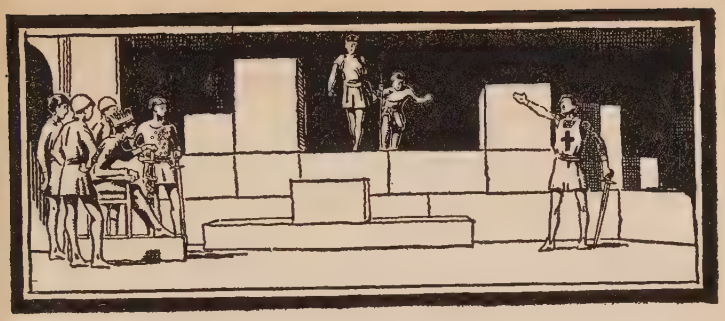
No stage curtain should be used, because it inevitably breaks the continuity of action needed in a chronicle play. The characters move off the stage at the end of each scene. At the end of Scene IV, after Roland has been led to Paradise by Saint Gabriel, the Frankish knights slain on the battlefield rise up and follow in the direction Roland has taken; while the Saracens, forbidden Paradise, depart toward the underworld, in the other direction, along the lower level. All this action is carried on slowly and with great dignity.

As in Deus Volt, the lighting was by modified daylight; the armor was of burlap painted with aluminum radiator paint; the helmets, of cardboard, were similarly turned into steel. For horses (Scenes II and V), hobbyhorses similar to Aucassin's horse were used. For the rest, the play itself suggests all necessary details of stage management.

ROLAND

Characters

CHARLES, *the Emperor*
COUNT ROLAND
COUNT OLIVER
ARCHBISHOP TURPIN
DUKE NAYMES
COUNT GANELON
KING MARSILA
QUEEN BRAMIMONDE
THIERRY, PINABEL — *Frankish Barons*
OTHER FRANKISH BARONS
BLANCANDRIN, *Saracen Ambassador*
ESTRAMARIN, PRIAMON — *Saracen Knights*
SAINT GABRIEL



ROLAND

Scene I

(*The Emperor is in a great garden: near him, Roland and Oliver, and other Barons with them.*)

Blancandrin: Greetings in the name of God whom ye adore. Marsila would fain give you good store of his substance, bears and lions, and greyhounds in the leash, seven hundred camels, and a thousand falcons past the moulting time, four hundred mules laden with gold and silver, that ye may carry away fifty full wains of treasure; so many bezants of fine gold shall there be that well may ye reward your men of arms therewith. Long have you tarried in this land: it is meet that you return again to Aix in France; there my lord will follow you, and receive your faith.

Charles: Fairly have ye spoken. Yet King Marsila is much mine enemy. By what token may I set my trust in your speech?

Blancandrin: By hostages, of which you shall have ten or fifteen or twenty. Though it will be to death, I will send mine own son. At the high feast of St. Michael of the Peril Marsila will be baptized, if God wills it.

Charles: Yea, even yet he may be saved. (*Pause.*) Lords, barons, King Marsila has sent me messengers, but I know not what may be in his heart.

NAYMES: King Marsila is spent with war. Thou hast taken his castles and vanquished his men. When now that he entreats thy mercy, it were sin to press him further. This great war should have an end.

BARONS: The Duke hath spoken wisely.

CHARLES: Lords, barons, what messenger shall we send to King Marsila at Saragossa?

ROLAND: Right glad were I to go.

CHARLES: By my beard which thou seest whiten, not one of the Twelve Peers * shall be chosen.

ROLAND: Let it be Ganelon, my stepfather.

BARONS: Yea, well will he do your errand; if ye pass him by ye will send none so wise.

CHARLES: Ganelon, come thou hither and receive the glove and the staff. Thou hast heard thou art chosen of the Franks.

GANELON: Sir, it is Roland who has done this thing; never again shall I hold him in my love all the days of my life, nor shall I hold Oliver in that he is his comrade, nor the Twelve Peers in that they love him so much. And I defy them.

CHARLES (*sternly*): Thy wrath is over-great; and certes go thou must, in that I command thee.

GANELON: Go I may, but without surety. (*To Roland*) Thou fool, why art thou in so great wrath? It is known of all that I am thy stepfather, and thou hast named me to go unto Marsila. If God grant me to return again I shall bring woe upon thee so great it shall endure all the days of thy life.

ROLAND: Thou speakest pride and folly, and all men know I reck naught of threats. But a man of counsel should bear

* Twelve Peers: the twelve equals or companions, of whom Roland and Oliver were the best known. The historical institution of the twelve peers of France was established much later.

this message, and, if the King wills it, I am ready to go in thy stead.

GANELON: Nay, in my stead thou shalt not go. Thou art not my man, nor am I thy overlord. Charles has commanded me that I do his errand, and I will go unto Marsila in Saragossa. But mayhap I shall do there some folly to ease me of my great wrath.

(*At these words Roland falls a-laughing.*)

(*To Roland*) Little love have I for thee in that thou hast brought false judgment upon me. O just King, lo, I stand before thee ready to do thy commandment.

(*Charles holds out to Ganelon his right glove. But Ganelon, who fain would have been elsewhere, in taking the glove lets it fall to earth.*)

BARONS: God, what may this betide? Great woe shall come upon us from this embassage.

GANELON: Lords, ye shall have tidings thereof.

(*Ganelon takes his way toward Spain. Charles and his court leave, going toward France.*)

SCENE II

The Pyrenees

(*Ganelon is riding under the high olive trees. He overtakes Blancandrin, who falls back to ride beside him. Cunningly they speak one to another.*)

BLANCANDRIN: Greatly I marvel at this Charles, who is white-headed and hoary. Methinks he is two hundred years and more. When will he yield him in the strife?

GANELON: That will never be, so long as his nephew is a living man.

BLANCANDRIN: Fair Sir Ganelon, how may we slay this Roland?

GANELON: Even that will I tell thee. The Emperor will be

at the main pass of Cizre, and he will have set his rear guard behind him. In it will be the mighty Count Roland, his nephew, and Oliver, in whom he sets his trust, and in their company will be twenty thousand Franks. But do thou send against them one hundred thousand of thy Paynims, and do them battle a first time, that the men of France may be smitten and sore hurt. Now mayhap, in this first battle, thine own may be slain with great slaughter, but do thou set upon the Franks a second time, with like array, that Roland may in no wise escape.

BLANCANDRIN: Swear to me that thou wilt betray Roland.

GANELON: Let it be as thou wilt.

(*He swears the treason on the relics in his sword Murglais, and therewith becomes a traitor. They go off through the gate of Saragossia.*)

SCENE III

Roncevaux

(*Oliver goes up into a high mountain, and looks away to the right down a grassy valley, and sees the host of the heathen coming on. He calls to Roland, his comrade.*)

OLIVER: I have seen the Paynims! Never was so great a multitude seen of living men. Those of the vanguard are upon a hundred thousand, all armed with shields and helmets, and clad in white hauberks; right straight are the shafts of their lances, and bright the points thereof. Such a battle we shall have as was never before seen of man. Ye lords of France, may God give you might! and stand ye firm that we be not overcome.

FRANKS: Foul fall him who flees! For no peril of death will we fail thee.

OLIVER: It is Ganelon who has done this treason. Roland, comrade, I pray thee sound thy horn of ivory. Charles will hear it, and will return with all his host.

ROLAND: That were but folly, and thereby would I lose all fame in sweet France. Now God forfend that through me my kinsman be brought to shame, or aught of dishonor befall fair France.

OLIVER: I see no shame herein. I have seen the Saracens of Spain, they cover the hills and the valleys, the heaths and the plains. Great are the hosts of this hostile folk, and ours is but a little fellowship.

ROLAND: My desire is the greater thereby. May God and His most holy angels forfend that France should lose aught of worship through me. Rather had I die than bring dishonor upon me. The Emperor loves us for dealing stout blows.

(*The Archbishop Turpin approaches. He spurs his horse to the crest of a knoll, and speaks to the Franks.*)

TURPIN: Lords, barons, Charles left us here, and it is a man's devoir to die for his king. Now help ye to uphold Christianity. Confess your sins and pray God's mercy; and, that your souls may be saved, I will absolve you. If ye are slain ye will be holy martyrs, and ye shall have seats in the higher Paradise.

ROLAND: Lords, barons, ride on softly. The Paynims come seeking destruction, and this day we shall have plunder so goodly and great that no king of France hath ever taken any of so great price.

OLIVER: Lords, barons, hold ye the field! and in God's name I pray you bethink you both how to deal good blows and how to take them. And forget not the battle cry of Charles.

FRANKS: Montjoy! Montjoy! Montjoy!

(*They draw their swords and rush off to battle.*)

Scene IV

Roncevaux

(*Franks and Paynims are joined in battle.*)

Estramarin: Thou Frankish felon! Mad is the King who left thee behind in the Passes.

Priamon: Today shall fair France lose her fame!

Frank: Out, coward! Charles is not mad. (*He slays Estramarin.*) He did well and knightly to leave us in the passes. Today shall fair France lose naught of her fame!

(*They fight. The Frank falls by the sword of Priamon, who crouches and watches.*)

Second Frank: Sir Comrade, now have we no knight of more valour. Now God grant me to avenge thee.

(*Priamon plunges his sword into the Frank's body.*)

Priamon: Lay on, Paynims!

Roland: Sir Comrade, as God may save thee, see how many a good man at arms lies on the ground! We may well have pity on sweet France the fair that must now be desolate of such barons. Ah, King and friend, would thou wert here! Oliver, my brother, what shall we do? How shall we send him tidings?

Oliver: Nay, I know not how to seek him. Rather had I die than bring dishonor upon me.

Roland: I will sound my horn of ivory and Charles will hear it sounding through the pass. I pledge thee my faith the Franks will return again.

Oliver: Therein would be great shame for thee and dishonor for all thy kindred, a reproach that would last all the days of their life. Thou wouldst not sound it when I bid thee. Now thou shalt not by my counsel.

Roland: Sore is our battle. I will blow a blast, and Charles the King shall hear it, through the pass.

OLIVER: That would not be knightly. When I bid thee, comrade, thou didst disdain it. Through thy folly these Franks have come to their death. Woe worth thy prowess, Roland. Charles the Great—never till God's Judgment Day shall there be such another man! Never more shall he have service at our hands. This day our loyal fellowship shall have an end.

TURPIN: Sir Roland, and thou, Sir Oliver, in God's name I pray ye, let be this strife. Little help shall we now have of thy horn. Yet it were better to sound it. If the King come he will avenge us and the Paynims shall not go hence rejoicing.

ROLAND: Sir, thou speakest well and truly. (*Roland sets his ivory horn to his lips, and blows it with all the might he has. Turpin leaves him.*) Ye Frankish barons, I see ye die through me, yet can I do naught to save or defend you. May God aid you! Oliver, brother, I must not fail thee. Sir Comrade, let us return to the battle.

OLIVER: Comrade, keep near me. In great sorrow this day shall we be parted.

(*They go off. Turpin staggers in, wounded, and falls. Roland reënters, supporting Oliver whom he lays gently down.*)

ROLAND: Sir Comrade, woe worth thy hardiness! We twain have held together for years and days—never didst thou me wrong or I thee. Since thou art dead, alack that I yet live. (*Roland swoons.*)

TURPIN: In Roncevaux there is a swift streamlet. I will go to it, to bring of its water to Roland.

(*He tries to crawl away; but he is so weak that he falls forward upon his face and the anguish of death overcomes him. Priamon, who has feigned death, rises stealthily, crawls to Roland's side, and seizes his sword.*)

PRIAMON: Now is the nephew of Charles overthrown. This

his sword will I carry into Arabia. (*Roland awakes and feels that his sword is being taken. But he holds his ivory horn and with it smites the Saracen. Priamon falls dead at his feet.*)

ROLAND: Coward, what made thee so bold as to lay hands upon me, whether right or wrong? No man shall hear it but shall hold thee a fool. Now is my horn of ivory broken in the bell and its gold and its crystals have fallen. (*With much striving he gets upon his feet.*) Saint Mary, help me now! Ah, Durendal, alas for thy goodness! Now am I near to death and have no more need of thee. May the man who would flee before another never possess thee! (*Before him lies a stone. In sorrow and wrath he smites ten blows upon it. The sword neither breaks nor splinters.*) O Durendal, how fair and bright thou art; in the sunshine how thou flashest and shinest! Now am I heavy of heart because of this my sword. Rather would I die than that it should fall into the hands of the Paynims. (*Roland smites the sword again upon the stone. The sword springs back into the air unbroken. When he sees he may in no wise break it, he mourns it, speaking softly.*) O Durendal, how fair and holy a thing thou art! In thy golden hilt is many a relic. It is not meet that thou fall into the hands of the Paynims. (*Roland climbs higher toward a pine, and casts himself down upon the green grass. Beneath him he lays his sword and his horn of ivory. He turns his face toward the Paynims.*)

With thee have I conquered many wide lands held by Charles of the white beard. Thereby is the Emperor great and mighty.

God, through thy grace forgive me the wrongs, both great and small, which I have done from the day I was born even to this day on which I am stricken. (*He holds*

out his right glove toward God.) Save thou my soul from the perils to which it is brought through the sins I have wrought in my life.

(*The angels of heaven come down to him. Saint Gabriel has taken the glove from his hand. Then his head sinks on his arm; with clasped hands he has gone to his end. God sends him his angel Cherubim, and Saint Michael of the Peril; with them comes Saint Gabriel. They carry the soul of the Count into Paradise.*)

Scene V

(*King Marsila has fled to Saragossa. He lies at the foot of the tower sorely wounded. By him a Saracen weeps. High in the tower stands Bramimonde. She looks out over the city.*)

Bramimonde: Ah, Saragossa, how reft of beauty art thou now! Charles of the white beard has slain thy knights, and thou hast lost Marsila, thy King, who held thee in fee.

Saracen: Thy right hand has been smitten off, gentle King. It is the deed of Roland, the puissant count. May Mahound aid thee!

Bramimonde: Those are foolish words. Our gods on whom you call have failed us in battle. They are felons. Charles is proud and undefeated. Woe worth the day that there be no one to kill him!

Marsila: Charles the Emperor has slain my men, he has ravaged my lands. My cities he has stormed. And he has slept this night on the banks of the Ebro.

Bramimonde: I hear the trumpets of those of France, and great is the noise of their cry of Montjoy!

Marsila: Now is the hand of death upon me, and I have neither son, nor daughter, nor heir! Charles will be lord of all Spain!

Bramimonde: In an evil hour were we born! Alas, my lord,

our men are vanquished. I see the army of Charles coming with a great shining of hauberks and helmets.

MARSILA (*to the Saracen*): Take me in your arms and lift me up that I may see the army of the Emperor. (*He falls back dead, in the arms of the Saracen.*)

SARACEN: Aid us, Mahound! Our gentle King is dead. (*He runs off into the city as Bramimonde descends from the tower.*)

BRAMIMONDE: Marsila!—wretched am I, and born to misfortune. I have lost my lord. Alas, what will become of me? Is there no one to slay me?

(*A Frankish Knight rides up to the gate.*)

FRANKISH KNIGHT: Where has Marsila hidden himself? I bring a summons from Charles.

BRAMIMONDE: Marsila is dead. I am Bramimonde, his queen.

FRANKISH KNIGHT: Lady, thou art made captive by Charles of the white beard. With the Franks shalt thou return into fair France. (*Bramimonde draws back.*) Have no fear. For he wishes thee naught but good.

(*He has mounted her upon his horse. He takes the bridle and leads her off.*)

SCENE VI

Aix

(*The Emperor is come again to Aix. Ganelon, the felon, in chains of iron, is before the palace. Serving men have bound him to a stake.*)

CHARLES: Lords and barons, now judge me the right concerning Ganelon. He went among my host in Spain with me, and bereft me of twenty thousand of my Franks, and of my nephew whom ye shall see no more, and of Oliver, the courteous, the valiant; and the Twelve Peers likewise he betrayed for money.

PINABEL: Charles, we beg thee pardon Ganelon, that henceforth he may serve you in all faith and love. Let him live, for he is of gentle birth.

CHARLES: Woe is me. Faithless ye are to me.

THIERRY: Fair Sir King, make not such sorrow. Howsoever Roland may have wronged Ganelon, thy service should have been his protection; Ganelon is a felon in that he betrayed him, for thereby he hath broken his oath to thee. And for this I condemn him to hanging and death, and that his body be used as that of a traitor, since he did traitorously. If he hath any kinsman who will give me the lie, I will uphold my judgment by the sword I have girded here at my side.

BARONS: That is well said.

PINABEL: Lo, Thierry has pronounced his judgment. I give him the lie and would do him battle.

(*Thierry and Pinabel draw and do battle.*)

CHARLES: O God, make clear the right!

PINABEL: Now yield thee, Thierry, and I will be thy man in all love and faith, and of my havings I will give thee whatsoever thou wilt; but do thou make Ganelon's peace with the king.

THIERRY: Nay, that will I not do. I were a very traitor an I should agree. May God judge between thee and me this day! (*They fight again.*) Let be this battle, and I will make thy peace with Charles, but to Ganelon such justice shall be done that men shall not stint talking of it to the world's end.

PINABEL: No, so God help me! I will hold by my kin, nor will I ever yield me to any man living. Rather would I die than bring that shame upon me. (*He smites the helmet. Thierry is wounded in the face, but God spares him. Then Thierry smites Pinabel on the head and he falls.*)

THE BARONS: God has made manifest his might!

BARON: It is meet that Ganelon be hanged, and likewise his kinsmen, who answered for him.

(*They lead Ganelon and his kinsmen out to be hanged. The Barons leave and Charles remains alone. The day passes and the night darkens.*)

CHARLES: Dear Roland, may God have mercy upon thee! May thy soul be brought to Paradise! For the arraying and winning of great battles, never has the world seen thy like.

(*The King takes his helmet off and lies down. As he sleeps Saint Gabriel comes to him from God.*)

GABRIEL: Charles, now call together the hosts of thy Empire, and go in thy might into the land of Bire, and give succour to King Vivien at Imph, for the Paynims have laid siege about his city, and the Christians cry out to thee and entreat thee.

CHARLES: O God, how is my life oppressed with burdens!

(*He weeps and plucks his white beard. He goes out.*)

ROLAND

Personnages

CHARLES, *l'Empereur*
LE COMTE ROLAND
LE COMTE OLIVIER
TURPIN, *l'Archevêque*
LE DUC NAYMES
LE COMTE GANELON
LE ROI MARSILE
LA REINE BRAMIMONDE
THIERRY, PINABEL } *Barons Français*
AUTRES BARONS FRANÇAIS
BLANCANDRIN, *Ambassadeur des Sarrasins*
ESTRAMARIN, PRIAMON } *Chevaliers Sarrasins*
SAINT GABRIEL

ROLAND

Scène I

(*L'empereur est dans un grand verger: près de lui, Roland et Olivier, et avec eux beaucoup d'autres barons.*)

Blancandrin: Salut au nom de Dieu, le Glorieux, que nous devons adorer! Entendez ce que vous mande le roi Marsile, le preux. Il s'est bien enquis de la loi qui sauve; aussi vous veut-il donner de ses richesses à foison, ours et lions, et lévriers enchaînés, sept cents chameaux et mille autours sortis de mue, quatre cents mulets, d'or et d'argent troussés, cinquante chars dont vous ferez un charroi, comblés de tant de besants d'or fin que vous en pourrez largement payer vos soudoyers. En ce pays vous avez fait un assez long séjour. En France, à Aix, il vous sied de retourner. Là vous suivra, il vous l'assure, mon seigneur.

Charles: Vous avez très bien parlé. Mais le roi Marsile est mon grand ennemi. De ces paroles que vous venez de dire, comment pourrai-je avoir garantie?

Blancandrin: Par des otages, dont vous aurez ou dix, ou quinze, ou vingt. Dût-il périr, j'y mettrai un mien fils, et vous en recevrez, je crois, de mieux nés encore. Quand vous serez en votre palais souverain, à la haute fête de Saint Michel du Péril, là, en vos bains, que Dieu fit pour vous, Marsile veut devenir chrétien.

CHARLES: Il peut encore parvenir au salut. Seigneurs barons, le roi Marsile m'a envoyé ses messagers. Mais je ne sais quel est le fond de son cœur.

NAYMES: Le roi Marsile est désespéré dans sa guerre: tous ses châteaux, vous les lui avez ravis; vous avez vaincu ses hommes. Aujourd'hui qu'il vous mande que vous le receviez à merci, lui en faire pis, ce serait péché. Cette grande guerre ne doit pas aller plus avant.

BARONS: Le duc a bien parlé!

CHARLES: Seigneurs barons, qui y enverrons-nous, à Saragosse, vers le roi Marsile?

ROLAND: J'y puis aller très bien.

CHARLES: Par cette barbe que vous voyez toute blanche, malheur à qui me nommerait l'un des Douze Pairs! *

ROLAND: Ce sera Ganelon, mon parâtre.

BARONS: Certes il est homme à le faire; lui écarté, vous n'enverrez pas un plus sage.

CHARLES: Ganelon, approchez et recevez le bâton et le gant. Vous l'avez bien entendu: les Francs vous ont choisi.

GANELON: Sire, c'est Roland qui a tout fait! Je ne l'aimerai de ma vie, ni Olivier, parce qu'il est son compagnon, ni les Douze Pairs, parce qu'ils l'aiment tant. Je les défie, sire, sous votre regard!

CHARLES: Vous avez trop de courroux. Vous irez certes, puisque je le commande.

GANELON: J'y puis aller, mais sans nulle sauvegarde. (*à Roland*) Fou! pourquoi ta frénésie? On le sait bien que je suis ton parâtre et voici que tu m'as marqué pour aller vers Marsile. Si Dieu donne que je revienne de là-bas, je te ferai tel dommage qui durera aussi longtemps que tu vivras!

* Les Douze Pairs: les douze compagnons d'armes dont Roland et Olivier étaient les plus renommés. L'institution historique des douze pairs de France fut établie beaucoup plus tard.

ROLAND: Ce sont propos d'orgueil et de folie. On le sait bien, je n'ai cure d'une menace; mais pour un message il faut un homme de sens; si le roi veut, je suis prêt: je le ferai à votre place.

GANELON: Tu n'iras pas à ma place! Tu n'es pas mon vassal, je ne suis pas ton seigneur. Charles commande que je fasse son service: j'irai à Saragosse, vers Marsile; mais avant que j'apaise ce grand courroux où tu me vois, j'aurai joué quelque jeu de ma façon.

(*Quand Roland l'entend, il se prend à rire.*)

Je ne vous aime pas, vous qui avez fait tourner sur moi cet injuste choix. Droit empereur, me voici devant vous: je veux accomplir votre commandement.

(*L'empereur lui tend son gant. Mais le comte Ganelon, qui eut voulu n'être pas là, en prenant le gant. le laisse tomber à terre.*)

BARONS: Dieu! quel signe est-ce là? De ce message nous viendra une grande perte.

GANELON: Seigneurs, vous en entendrez des nouvelles!

(*Ganelon prend la route de l'Espagne. Charles et sa cour s'acheminent vers la France.*)

SCÈNE II

Les Pyrénées

(*Ganelon chevauche sous de hauts oliviers. Il a rejoint Blancandrin, qui s'attarde avec lui. Tous deux conversent par grande ruse.*)

BLANCANDRIN: Je m'émerveille, et j'en ai bien sujet. Charlemagne est vieux et chenu; à mon escient il a deux cents ans et mieux; quand sera-t-il recru de mener ses guerres?

GANELON: Jamais, tant que vivra son neveu.

BLANCANDRIN: Beau sire Ganelon, comment pourrons-nous faire périr Roland?

GANELON: Je sais bien vous le dire. Le roi viendra aux meilleurs Ports de Cize: derrière lui il aura laissé son arrière-garde. Son neveu en sera, le puissant comte Roland, et Olivier, en qui tant il se fie, et en leur compagnie vingt mille Français. De vos païens envoyez-leur cent mille, et qu'ils leur livrent une première bataille. La gent de France y sera meurtrie et mise à mal, et il y aura aussi, je ne dis pas, grande tuerie des vôtres. Mais livrez-leur de même une seconde bataille: qu'il tombe dans l'une ou dans l'autre, Roland n'échappera pas.

BLANCANDRIN: Vous me jurerez de trahir Roland.

GANELON: Qu'il en soit comme il vous plaît!

(Sur les reliques de son épée Murgleis, il jure la trahison; et voici qu'il a forfait. Ils sortent par la porte de Saragosse.)

SCÈNE III

Roncevaux

(Olivier est monté sur une hauteur. Il regarde à droite par un val herbeux: il voit venir la gent des païens. Il appelle Roland, son compagnon.)

OLIVIER: J'ai vu les païens. Jamais homme sur terre n'en vit plus. Devant nous ils sont bien cent mille, l'écu au bras, le heaume lacé, le blanc haubert revêtu; et leurs épieux bruns luisent, hampe dressée. Vous aurez une bataille, telle qu'il n'en fut jamais. Seigneurs Français, que Dieu vous donne sa force! Tenez fermement, pour que nous ne soyons pas vaincus!

LES FRANÇAIS: Honni soit qui s'enfuit! Jusqu'à la mort, pas un ne vous manquera.

OLIVIER: Ganelon nous a trahis, le félon, le traître! Roland, mon compagnon, sonnez donc votre cor: Charles l'entendra, et l'armée reviendra.

ROLAND: Ce serait faire comme un fou. En douce France j'y perdrais mon renom. Ne plaise à Dieu que pour moi mes parents soient blâmés et que douce France tombe dans le mépris!

OLIVIER: Pourquoi vous blâmerait-on? J'ai vu les Sarrasins d'Espagne: les vaux et les monts en sont couverts et les landes et toutes les plaines. Grandes sont les armées de cette engeance étrangère et bien petite notre troupe!

ROLAND: Mon ardeur s'en accroît. Ne plaise au Seigneur Dieu ni à ses anges qu'à cause de moi France perde son prix! J'aime mieux mourir que choir dans la honte! Mieux nous frappons, mieux l'empereur nous aime.

(*L'archevêque Turpin s'approche. Il éperonne son cheval et monte sur un tertre dénudé. Il appelle les Français.*)

TURPIN: Seigneurs barons, Charles nous a laissés ici: pour notre roi nous devons bien mourir. Aidez à soutenir la chrétienté! Vous voyez les Sarrasins. Battez votre coulpe, demandez à Dieu merci; je vous absoudrai pour guérir vos âmes. Si vous mourez, vous serez de saints martyrs; vous aurez des sièges au plus haut paradis.

ROLAND: Seigneurs barons, doucement, au pas! Ces païens vont en quiête de leur martyre. Avant ce soir nous aurons gagné un beau et riche butin: nul roi de France n'eut jamais le pareil.

OLIVIER: Seigneurs barons, tenez fermement en bataille! Je vous en prie pour Dieu, soyez résolus à bien frapper, coup rendu pour coup reçu! Et n'oublions pas le cri d'armes de Charles.

LES FRANÇAIS: Montjoie! Montjoie! Montjoie!

(*Ils tirent leurs épées et s'élancent dans la bataille.*)

Scène IV

Roncevaux

(*Français et païens se sont joints.*)

Estramarin: Félons français! Bien fou le roi, qui vous laissa aux ports!

Priamon: En ce jour, douce France perdra sa louange.

Un Français: Non, fils de serf, Charles n'est pas fou. (*Il abat Estramarin d'un coup d'épée.*) Nous laisser aux ports, ce fut agir en preux. En ce jour douce France ne perdra point sa louange. (*Ils se battent. Le Français succombe aux coups du Sarrasin. Celui-ci contrefait le mort mais continue à épier les Français.*)

Deuxième Français: Seigneur compagnon, nous n'avions pas un chevalier plus vaillant. Que Dieu me donne de te venger!

(*Priamon lui plonge au corps la pointe de son épieu.*)

Priamon: Frappez, païens!

Roland: Beau seigneur, cher compagnon, par Dieu! que vous en semble? Voyez tant de vaillants qui gisent là contre terre! Nous avons bien sujet de plaindre douce France, la belle! Vidée de tels barons, comme elle reste déserte! Ah, roi, ami, que n'êtes-vous ici? Olivier, frère, comment pourrons-nous faire? Comment lui manderons-nous des nouvelles?

Olivier: Comment? Je ne sais pas. On en pourrait parler à notre honte, et j'aime mieux mourir!

Roland: Je sonnerai l'olifant. Charles l'entendra, qui passe les ports. Je vous le jure, les Francs reviendront.

Olivier: Ce serait pour tous vos parents un grand déshonneur et un opprobre et cette honte serait sur eux toute leur vie! Quand je vous demandais de le faire, vous n'en fites rien. Faites-le maintenant: ce ne sera plus par mon conseil.

ROLAND: Notre bataille est dure. Je sonnerai mon cor, le roi Charles l'entendra.

OLIVIER: Ce ne serait pas d'un preux! Quand je vous disais de le faire, compagnon, vous n'avez pas daigné. Si nos Français sont morts, c'est par votre légèreté. Votre prouesse, Roland, c'est à la malheure que nous l'avons vue. Charles le Grand—jamais il n'y aura un tel homme jusqu'au dernier jugement!—ne recevra plus notre aide. Aujourd'hui prend fin notre loyal compagnonnage.

TURPIN: Sire Roland, et vous, sire Olivier, je vous en prie de par Dieu, ne vous querellez point! Sonner du cor ne vous sauverait plus. Et pourtant, sonnez, ce sera bien mieux. Vienne le roi, il pourra nous venger: il ne faut pas que ceux d'Espagne s'en retournent joyeux.

ROLAND: Seigneur, vous avez bien dit. (*Roland a mis l'olifant à ses lèvres. Il sonne à pleine force. Turpin sort.*) Barons Français, je vous vois mourir pour moi, et je ne puis vous défendre ni vous sauver: que Dieu vous aide, qui jamais ne mentit! Olivier, frère, je ne dois pas vous faillir, Sire compagnon, remettons-nous à frapper!

OLIVIER: Sire compagnon, venez vers moi, tout près; à grande douleur, en ce jour, nous serons séparés.

(*Ils sortent. Turpin réapparaît, blessé. Il se traîne, et tombe. À ce moment Roland entre soutenant Olivier. Il l'étend doucement à terre.*)

ROLAND: Sire compagnon, c'est pitié de votre hardiesse! Nous fûmes ensemble et des ans et des jours: jamais tu ne me fis de mal, jamais je ne t'en fis. Quand te voilà mort, ce m'est douleur de vivre. (*Roland s'évanouit.*)

TURPIN: À Roncevaux il y a une eau courante. Je veux y aller, j'en donnerai à Roland.

(*Il s'éloigne, chancelant. Il est si faible qu'il ne peut avancer. Il tombe, la tête en avant. La mort l'étreint*

durement. Priamon, qui a contrefait un mort, se redresse debout, rampe vers Roland et se saisit de son épée.)

PRIAMON: Il est vaincu, le neveu de Charles! Cette épée, je l'emporterai en Arabie!

(*Roland sent qu'il veut lui prendre son épée. Mais il tient l'olifant, qu'il n'a pas voulu perdre. Il l'en frappe sur son heaume. Le païen s'effondre mort à ses pieds.*)

ROLAND: Païen, fils de serf, comment fus-tu si osé que de te saisir de moi, soit à droit, soit à tort? Nul ne l'entendra dire qui ne te tienne pour un fou! Voilà fendu le pavillon de mon olifant; l'or en est tombé, et le cristal. (*Il se met sur ses pieds, tant qu'il peut s'évertue.*) Ah, sainte Marie, à mon aide! Ah, Durendal, bonne Durendal, c'est pitié de vous. Puisque je meurs, je n'ai plus charge de vous. Ne venez jamais aux mains d'un homme qui puisse fuir devant un autre! (*Devant lui est une pierre bise. Il y frappe dix coups, plein de deuil et de rancœur. L'acier grince, mais ne se brise, ni ne s'ébrèche.*) Ah! Durendal, comme tu es belle, et claire, et blanche! Contre le soleil comme tu luis et flambes! Pour cette épée j'ai douleur et peine. Plutôt mourir que la laisser aux païens! (*Roland frappe encore la pierre bise. L'épée grince; vers le ciel elle rebondit. Quand il voit qu'il ne la brisera point, Roland la plaint en lui-même, très doucement.*) Ah! Durendal, que tu es belle et sainte! Ton pommeau d'or est plein de reliques. Il n'est pas juste que des païens te possèdent. (*Il monte plus haut vers un pin, puis s'étend sur l'herbe verte, face contre terre. Sous lui il met son épée et l'olifant. Il tourne sa tête du côté de la gent païenne.*) Par vous j'aurai conquis tant de larges terres, que tient Charles, qui a la barbe fleurie! L'empereur en est puissant et riche.

Dieu, par ta grâce, mea culpa, pour mes péchés, les grands et les menus, que j'ai faits depuis l'heure où je

naquis jusqu'à ce jour où me voici abattu! (*Il a tendu vers Dieu son gant droit.*) Sauve mon âme de tous périls pour les péchés que j'ai faits dans ma vie.

(*Les anges du ciel descendent à lui. Saint Gabriel l'a pris le gant de sa main. Sur son bras il a laissé retomber sa tête; il est allé, les mains jointes, à sa fin. Dieu lui envoie son ange Chérubin et saint Michel du Péril; avec eux y vint saint Gabriel. Ils portent l'âme du comte en paradis.*)

Scène V

(*Le roi Marsile s'est enfui à Saragosse. Il est étendu au pied de la tour gravement blessé. Devant lui un Sarrasin pleure. Au-dessus dans la tour se tient Bramimonde. Elle regarde la ville.*)

Bramimonde: Ah, Saragosse! Comme te voilà déparée. Charles à la barbe fleurie a massacré tes chevaliers et tu perds Marsile, le roi qui t'avait en sa baillie.

Sarrasin: Vous avez perdu le poing droit, gentil roi: c'est Roland qui l'a tranché, le comte puissant. Que Mahomet vous sauve!

Bramimonde: J'entends de très folles paroles. Vos dieux que vous nommez, ils nous ont failli en bataille. Ce sont félons. Charles est vaillant et plein d'outrecuidance. Quel deuil qu'il n'y ait personne qui le tue!

Marsile: Charles, l'empereur, m'a tué mes hommes, il a ravagé ma terre. Mes cités, il les a forcées; et il a couché cette nuit aux rives de l'Èbre.

Bramimonde: J'entends sonner les clairons de France, et grand est le bruit de leur cri de Montjoie.

Marsile: Vous le voyez, la mort m'étreint et je n'ai ni fils, ni fille, ni héritier. Charles tiendra en sa seigneurie toute l'Espagne!

Bramimonde: Nous sommes nés à la malheure! Hélas,

seigneur, les voilà vaincus nos hommes. Je vois venir l'armée de Charles. Les heaumes et les hauberts luisent au soleil!

MARSILE (*au Sarrasin*): Prenez-moi dans vos bras, et me redressez, que je puisse voir l'armée de l'empereur. (*Il retombe mort entre les bras du Sarrasin.*)

SARRASIN: Que Mahomet nous protège! Notre gentil roi est mort. (*Il s'élance dans la ville tandis que Bramimonde descend de la tour.*)

BRAMIMONDE: Marsile!—Chétive, et née à la malheure, j'ai perdu mon seigneur! Hélas, que deviendrai-je douloureuse? N'y aura-t-il personne pour me tuer?

(*Un chevalier français arrive au galop à la porte de ville.*)

CHEVALIER: Marsile, où se cache-t-il? Charles le somme d'apparaître devant lui—

BRAMIMONDE: Marsile est mort. Me voici, Bramimonde, sa reine.

CHEVALIER: Dame, vous êtes prisonnière de Charles à la barbe fleurie. Avec les Français vous rentrerez en douce France. (*Bramimonde recule.*) Ne soyez pas douloureuse. Car il ne veut rien vous faire que du bien.

(*Il l'a fait monter sur son cheval. Il prend la bride et l'emmène.*)

SCÈNE VI

Aix

(*L'empereur est rentré à Aix. Ganelon, le félon, en des chaînes de fer, est devant le palais. Contre un poteau des serfs l'ont attaché.*)

CHARLES: Seigneurs, barons, jugez-moi Ganelon selon le droit. Il vint dans l'armée jusqu'en Espagne avec moi: il m'a ravi vingt mille de mes Français, et mon neveu, que vous

ne reverrez plus, et Olivier, le preux et le courtois; les Douze Pairs, il les a trahis pour de l'argent.

PINABEL: Sire, nous vous en prions, proclamez quitte le comte Ganelon; puis, qu'il vous serve en tout amour et toute foi! Laissez-le vivre, car il est très haut seigneur.

CHARLES: Vous êtes des félons—malheureux que je suis!

THIERRY: Beau sire roi, ne vous désolez pas ainsi. Si même Roland eut des torts envers Ganelon, Roland était à votre service; c'en devait être assez pour le garantir. Ganelon est félon, en tant qu'il a trahi: c'est envers vous qu'il s'est parjuré et qu'il a forfait. C'est pourquoi je juge qu'il soit pendu et qu'il meure, et que son corps soit traité comme celui d'un félon qui fit une félonie. S'il a un parent qui veuille m'en donner le démenti, je veux, de cette épée que j'ai ceinte, soutenir sur l'heure mon jugement.

BARONS: Vous avez bien dit.

PINABEL: Je vois céans Thierry, qui a jugé. Je fausse son jugement et je combattrai contre lui. (*Thierry et Pinabel tirent leurs épées et se combattent.*)

CHARLES: Ah, Dieu, faites resplendir le droit!

PINABEL: Thierry, rends-toi! Je seri ton vassal en toute foi, en tout amour; à ton plaisir je te donnerai de mes richesses; mais trouve pour Ganelon un accord avec le roi!

THIERRY: Honte sur moi si j'y consens en rien! Qu'entre nous deux, en ce jour, Dieu montre le droit!

(*Ils reprennent le combat.*)

Renonce à cette bataille! Je te trouverai un accord avec Charlemagne. Quant à Ganelon, justice sera faite de lui, et telle qu'à jamais, chaque jour il en sera parlé.

PINABEL: Ne plaise au Seigneur Dieu! Je veux soutenir toute ma parenté. Je ne me rendrai pour nul homme qui vive. J'aime mieux mourir qu'en subir le reproche.

(*Sur le heaume il frappe. La lame d'acier descend sur le front de Thierry. Dieu le protège. Thierry frappe Pinabel, et l'abat mort.*)

LES BARONS: Dieu y a fait miracle!

BARON: Il est bien droit que Ganelon soit pendu, et ses parents qui ont répondu pour lui.

(*Les barons ont emmené Ganelon et ses parents pour les mettre à mort. Charles est resté seul. Le jour s'en va, la nuit s'est faite noire. Le roi a enlevé son heaume et s'est étendu sur sa couche.*)

CHARLES: Ami Roland, que Dieu te fasse merci! Que ton âme soit mise en paradis! Nul homme jamais ne vit chevalier tel que toi pour engager les grandes batailles et les gagner.

(*De par Dieu, saint Gabriel lui vient dire en son sommeil:*)

GABRIEL: Charles, par tout ton empire lève tes armées. Par vive force tu iras en la terre de Bire, tu secourras le roi Vivien dans sa cité d'Imphe, où les païens ont mis le siège. Là les chrétiens t'appellent et te réclament.

CHARLES: Dieu! que de peines en ma vie! (*Ses yeux versent des larmes, il tire sa barbe blanche. Il sort.*)

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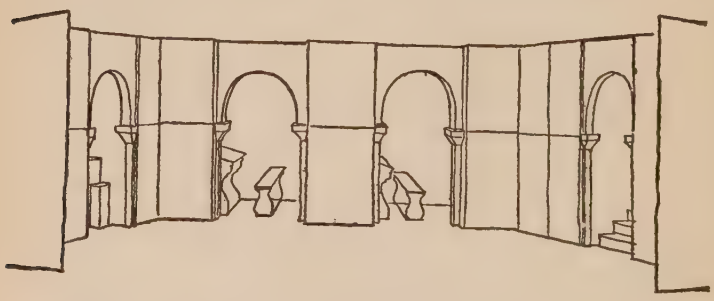
OUR LADY'S TUMBLER

Massenet's opera and a story by Anatole France have made Our Lady's Tumbler all too widely known; for Massenet and Anatole France, each in his own way, falsified the spirit of the legend. Its clarity and its naïveté are incarnate in the poem, Del Tumbeor Nostre-Dame, a poem probably of the twelfth century which has been translated more than once from a thirteenth century manuscript into English prose. We have used the version made by Alice Kemp Welch. It presents the series of scenes of which the narrative consists, in a style neither too archaic nor yet out of harmony with the original. In making our play, we simply picked out what seemed the most dramatic scenes, and transcribed the dialogue from indirect into direct discourse. We then translated the same dialogue from the Old French into language sufficiently modern for the children in our upper grades to understand. They studied the text which we now print following the English version, and finally acted it in that somewhat archaic French.

Though the dialogue is very brief, its every phrase is vivid. Says the Tumbler, turning somersaults

before Our Lady, "I am like a kid that frisks and gambols before its mother." But the life of the story, and of the days from which it dates, is expressed quite as vividly in the action as in the words. The children worked this out from their study of monastic life. They showed us, for instance, monks illuminating manuscripts, and walking in slow, devout procession behind their abbot to the Mass.

In such glimpses, they acted out the routine of daily life which forms the background of the Miracle. How



earnestly at least one of them studied such detail, you may judge from the labors of our Tumbler, who practiced her tricks for weeks before the performance, and almost every day invented new ones, quite in the spirit of her twelfth century prototype.

The stage set suggests a twelfth century monastery: the unseen portal of the church, on the right; a chapel to the Virgin next it, and half facing the audience; a cloister, center back; and on the left, the entrance to the unseen refectory and other quarters of the monks.

To suggest the Romanesque architecture we cut out

of beaverboard and colored four round arches, with indications of capitals at the points where these semicircles met the supporting pillars. Two of the arches were nailed to the tops of the three pillars bordering and separating the two nooks, or recesses, which stood for a cloister. These pillars each consisted of two No. 1 units set on end, with the narrow sides in front, and the wider sides, which formed the walls of the recesses, emphasizing their depth. A window in each recess was suggested by a sheet of paper with heavy outlines representing leads drawn upon it. In each of the cloister recesses was a seat upon which a monk sat, with his profile toward the audience, working at a desk on which a missal lay.

The chapel, set diagonally out from the back of the stage, was suggested in the same way. It was about twice as wide as the recesses. For an altar it had a No. 1 box set on end with two superposed No. 3 steps for the Virgin's feet.

While the costuming hardly requires mention it may be well to say that our devils were dressed in the mediaeval rather than the operatic tradition, with tight-fitting black costumes, and pointed tails. Their faces and hands were coal-black. The Virgin wore deep blue except for her golden halo. The Angels should be costumed along straight archaic lines, in colors rather than white. Long narrow wings of cardboard, painted like the wings of Fra Angelico's angels, may be used.

OUR LADY'S TUMBLER

Characters

The Virgin
The Monk
The Tumbler
The Abbot
Other Monks
Two Devils
Two Angels

OUR LADY'S TUMBLER

(*The holy Mother of God enters and seats herself in her chapel, silent and motionless. Monks enter the cloister and begin copying missals. The Abbot watches them. From the monastery comes a Monk with the Tumbler.*)

THE MONK: Thou art graceful and fair, and comely and well-formed. Dost thou know how to perform any office that falls to be done?

THE TUMBLER: I have lived only to tumble, to turn somersaults, to spring and to dance.

THE MONK: Dost thou know neither the Pater Noster, nor the Canticles, nor the Credo, nor the Ave Maria?

THE TUMBLER: To leap and to jump, this I know, but naught else.

(*The monastery bell rings. All the monks but one follow the Abbot, past Our Lady's Chapel, and out by the portal of the church.*)

THE TUMBLER: Holy Mary, what ails these folk that they deport themselves thus, and make show in this manner of such grief?

THE MONK: I trow that they pray God's grace.

THE TUMBLER: Unhappy being that I am, what do I here? For I know not even to pray aright.

(*The Monk follows the brothers into the church. The*

Tumbler stands a long time looking toward Our Lady's shrine. Chanting is heard.)

THE TUMBLER: Ah! Here am I like a tethered ox. After mine own manner, will I serve the Mother of God.

(*He takes off his habit, and lays his garments beside the altar, but keeps on a tunic, the which is very clinging and close-fitting. And he girds his tunic and prepares him, and he turns to the image, and gazes on it very humbly.*)

THE TUMBLER: How to sing, or how to read to you, that I know not, but truly I would make a choice for you of all my best tricks in great number.

(*He begins to turn somersaults, now high, now low, first forwards, then backwards. He tumbles and leaps, and turns gaily the Somersault of Metz. He bows to the image, for he pays homage to it as much as he is able. And anon he turns the French Somersault and then the Somersault of Champagne, and after that those of Spain and of Brittany and then that of Lorraine. And after that he does the Roman Somersault; and then he turns him with great grace, and looks very humbly on the image of the Mother of God.*)

THE TUMBLER: Lady, this is an honest performance. The others serve, and I serve also. Yonder they are singing, but I come here to divert you.

(*He tumbles and leaps again. The Monk coming out from the church stops and watches him from a covert nook. The Tumbler falls to the ground, dropping from sheer weariness.*)

THE TUMBLER: Lady, no more can I do now, but of a surety I shall come back again.

(*He takes up his clothing, and bows to the image and takes his leave, and goes into the monastery. The monks enter chanting from the church and go into the monastery also. The Monk who was hidden takes the Abbot*

by the sleeve, and whispers to him a long while. The Tumbler comes out from the monastery and the Abbot and the Monk hide themselves in the covert nook.)

THE TUMBLER: Lady, to your keeping I commend my body and my soul. Now may I be like a kid which frisks and gambols before its mother. Lady, I do homage to you with my heart and my body and my feet and my hands, for naught besides this do I understand. Lady, you can protect me; for God's sake do not despise me.

(*Again he turns the Somersault of Metz and capers full many a time until he is nigh fainting. And so greatly is he overcome that he falls heavily to the ground. But in a little, the Mother of God whom he served all without guile, comes to his succour, and well knows she how to aid him. And the sweet and noble Queen takes a white cloth, and with it she very quietly fans her minstrel before the altar. But of this the good man takes no heed, for he neither perceives nor does he know that he is in such fair company. The Abbot and the Monk fall upon their knees as the Virgin goes back to her altar. The Abbot and the Monk then come forth from their covert.*)

THE MONK: Your mercy, Sire! this is a holy man.

THE ABBOT: You speak truly. And now I straightway give command unto you that you speak to no one of that which you have seen, save to God and to me.

(*The Monk goes into the monastery. The Tumbler opens his eyes, and stirs. The Abbot bends over him.*)

THE ABBOT: This would I know, and I would that you answer me truly. By what service and in what manner do you earn your bread?

THE TUMBLER: Sire, this will be my death! This command will kill me.

(*The Tumbler faintly whispers to the Abbot the story of his life.*)

THE ABBOT: Brother, be silent now, for truly do I promise you that you shall be at peace with us. Good friends shall we be. Fair gentle brother, pray for me, and I will pray in return for you.

(*The Abbot makes the sign of the cross and at last it comes to pass that the Tumbler dies.*

And the Abbot and all his monks and the novices keep watch over him very humbly, and quite clearly do they see a right wondrous miracle. Of a truth do they see how the Mother of God and the Archangels are ranged around him. And there also are the very evil and cruel and violent Devils for to possess them of his soul. But in no wise is it lost, for the Mother of God receives it. Our Lady and the Angels depart, and bear it away.

The monks carry the body of her Tumbler, and the Abbot and all the monks and all the others who are there follow Our Lady and her Angels, while the bells in the tower ring of themselves.)

LE TOMBEOR DE NOTRE-DAME

Personnages

La Vierge
Le Moine
Le Tombeor
L'Abbé
Autres Moines
Deux Diables
Deux Anges

LE TOMBEOR DE NOTRE-DAME

(*Dame sainte Marie entre et silencieusement s'assied en sa chapelle. Dans le cloître les moines commencent à copier des missels sous les yeux de l'Abbé. Un Moine venant du monastère s'approche suivi du Tombeor.*)

LE MOINE: Vous êtes gracieux et beau et gentil et bien formé. Savez-vous faire un métier dont on aît besoin ici?

LE TOMBEOR: Je n'ai vécu que pour sauter, faire la culbute et danser.

LE MOINE: Ne savez-vous ni le Pater-Noster, ni les Cantiques, ni le Credo, ni le Salut?

LE TOMBEOR: Bondir et sauter oui je sais, mais je ne sais autre leçon.

(*La cloche sonne. Tous les moines, sauf un, suivent l'Abbé. Ils passent devant la chapelle de dame Marie et disparaissent par le portail de l'église.*)

LE TOMBEOR: Sainte Marie qu'ont ces gens qu'ils se démènent ainsi et montrent tant de douleur?

LE MOINE: Sans doute ils rendent grâce à Dieu.

LE TOMBEOR: Mais moi, chétif, que fais-je ci, car je ne sais pas bien prier?

(*Le Moine suit ses frères dans l'église. Resté seul, le Tombeor se dirige vers la chapelle. Il regarde longtemps la statue de la mère Dieu. On entend des chants.*)

LE TOMBEOR: Ah je suis ici comme un bœuf en laisse! Je

ferai ce que j'ai appris et servirai de mon métier la mère Dieu en son moutier.

(*Le Tombeor se dépouille de ses vêtements, les pose près de l'autel, et revêtu d'une simple cotte* il se prépare à faire ses tours. Mais avant, très humblement, contemple la statue de dame sainte Marie.*)

Je ne sais pour vous ni chanter, ni lire; mais certes je veux choisir pour vous tous mes beaux tours en quantité. (*Il commence ses sauts bas et petits, grands et hauts. Il fait gaiement le tour de Metz et s'incline devant dame sainte Marie pour lui faire hommage. Puis il fait le tour français, puis le tour champenois, le tour d'Espagne et celui que l'on fait en Bretagne. Le tour de Lorraine et enfin le tour romain. Il met sa main devant son front, se tourne et regarde très humblement l'image de la mère Dieu.*)

LE TOMBEOR: Dame, c'est un beau jeu. Les autres servent et je vous sers. Ils chantent des cantiques entre eux et je suis ci pour vous distraire.

(*Un Moine sort de l'église, s'arrête, se cache et l'épie. Le Tombeor fait encore de ses tours et épuisé se laisse tomber à terre.*)

Dame, je ne puis plus rien, mais vrai je reviendrai encore. (*Il se lève, reprend ses vêtements, s'incline devant l'image et s'en va vers le monastère. Les moines sortent lentement de l'église et rentrent aussi en leur monastère. L'Abbé passe le dernier. Le Moine qui était caché le saisit par la manche, lui parle à l'oreille et ils se cachent tous deux; quand le Tombeor reparaît sortant du monastère.*)

LE TOMBEOR: Dame, en votre garde je remets mon corps et mon âme. Puis-je ressembler à un cabri qui gambade devant sa mère! Dame, je vous adore du cœur, du corps, des pieds, des mains, car je ne sais ni plus ni moins. Dame,

* cotte: justaucorps.

vous pouvez me conduire. Pour Dieu ne me repoussez pas.

(*Encore il fait le tour de Metz et tant de sauts qu'il est prêt à défaillir et s'abat à terre; mais la mère Dieu qu'il a bien servie vient à son secours. La douce reine descend et d'un linge blanc évente son ménestrel bien doucement devant l'autel. Le bon homme n'y prend garde car il ne voit, ni ne sait qu'il est en si belle compagnie. L'Abbé se jette à genoux, le Moine, tout confus, l'imite tandis que dame sainte Marie remonte sur l'autel. L'Abbé et le Moine sortent alors de leur cachette.*)

LE MOINE: Sire, merci! C'est un saint homme que je vois ci.

L'ABBÉ: Vous dites vrai, et je vous mets en demeure de ne parler à aucun homme de ce que vous avez vu, si ce n'est à Dieu et à moi.

(*Le Moine entre dans le monastère. Le Tombeor ouvre les yeux et remue faiblement. L'Abbé se penche vers lui.*)

L'ABBÉ: Je veux savoir et je veux que vous me disiez vrai. À quoi servez-vous et à quoi devez-vous votre pain?

LE TOMBEOR: Sire, vous m'avez comme mort car ce commandement me tue.

(*Le Tombeor murmure à l'oreille de l'Abbé le secret de sa vie.*)

L'ABBÉ: Frère, taisez-vous. Je vous fais promesse que vous serez des nôtres. Moi et vous serons bons amis. Beau doux frère, priez pour moi et je prierai pour vous.

(*L'Abbé fait sur lui le signe de la croix. Le bon homme alors meurt bien brièvement. Et l'Abbé et tous ses moines, maint prêtre et maint chanoine, regardent humblement et voient bientôt un miracle très merveilleux. Car ils voient comment la mère Dieu et ses archanges entourent le ménestrel et aussi les esprits mauvais et le diable, ceux-ci pour avoir son âme. Mais la mère Dieu la reçoit et s'en va suivie de ses anges qui portent l'âme vers le ciel. Leux*

moines prennent le corps du serviteur de la douce reine et la suivent en leur moutier ainsi que l'Abbé et les moines, tandis que les cloches sonnent d'elles-mêmes à toute volée.)

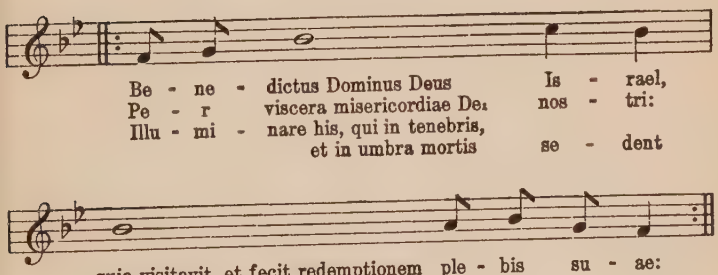
REFERENCES

Text: 1. French version: Del Tumbeor Nostre-Dame; edited by Dr. E. Lommatzsch and Dr. M. L. Wagner, Berlin, 1920; modern French version by Simone Lee and Germaine Wilson.

2. English version: Of the Tumbler of Our Lady, tr. by Alice Kemp Welch, the Medieval Library series, Chatto and Windus, London, 1908. (These excerpts are used by permission from the publishers.)

Music: 1. For the chant we used part of Zacharias' prophecy, St. Luke 1:68, 78-79 (Latin version, which we had learned at Christmas time, setting it to this Plain Song to which psalms were chanted:

CHANT


Be - ne - dictus Dominus Deus Is - rael,
Pe - r viscera misericordiae De: nos - tri:
Illu - mi - nare his, qui in tenebris,
et in umbra mortis se - dent
quia visitavit, et fecit redemptionem ple - bis su - ae:
in quibus visitavit nos, ori - ens ex al - to:
ad dirigendos pedes nostros in vi - am pa - cis.

Found in A Manual of Plain Song, by H. B. Briggs and W. H. Frere; published by Novello & Co. In this reprinting of the melody we have used modern notation to give a suggestion of the emphasis. The tempo is that of slow, easy speech, and emphasis is given where the sense and the pronunciation require it. A hymn to the Virgin like Ave Maris

Stella or Ave Regina Coelorum from the Liber Usualis Missae might well be substituted.

2. The bells at the end would probably be a joyful peal of sound, rather than a definite melody.

THE MIRACLE OF THÉOPHILE

From church and cathedral windows, the story of Théophile, famous in the Middle Ages, shed terror and comfort. Hell was fiery in those days; sorcerers and the Devil were real. But Our Lady was stronger than they; and she was kind and infinitely forgiving if even the worst of sinners would but appeal to her. Endless miracles attesting her mercy were the theme of song and poem; but among them all, none was perhaps more moving than the miracle of Théophile.

Rutebœuf, who wrote this miracle in verse, to be acted perhaps in a cloister or under the porch of a great church, could count on auditors who knew his theme. On such column capitals as those in the Vézelay church they had seen leering devils with their flame-like hair. In such bas-reliefs as that great vision in stone at Autun, they had watched the weighing of souls and their torment in hell. The teaching of some such sculpture none could have escaped. Nor could anyone in Rutebœuf's day have failed to worship the Queen of Heaven whose beauty sculpture set everywhere before men's eyes, and whose mercy the liturgic chants reëchoed through their souls.

As a dramatist Rutebœuf was crude indeed. I his play of Théophile he sketched his characters onl in coarse outline. He set his scenes one after anothe like unmortared stones. But, like his audience, h knew his theme. Possessed by it, indeed, he set i before them, stark and clear. And when, past th Mouth of Hell, he came to the repentance of poo Théophile, the beauty of our Lady's presence stirrec the true poet that, in Rutebœuf, so exquisitely out- shone the dramatist. From the imagery which gen- erations of worship had thrown, like flowers, at her feet, he chose what seemed to him least unworthy; and he wove for her so fragrant a garland of prayer that she must have smiled on him as on her servant Théophile through a scene which surely moved all spectators to tears.

For modern school children one might easily think the temper of this play far too remote. But, as every teacher knows, children recognize no limits to their imagination. They spend it like prodigals; they enjoy ranging through space and time. And it not only interests them to imagine, to study and act out the feelings, thoughts and scenes sketched by a remote poet like Rutebœuf; it gives them an excellent approach to history. It teaches them to grasp, even far off in space and time, the ideas so variously embodied in dogma, sculpture, music, poetry and drama, and to realize in part how these ideas both expressed and remolded the life of a people.

In our version of Théophile, we have cut whole scenes, whole speeches and parts of other speeches. We have carried this process to extremes, so as to

make the play actable by eighth grade children in our French classes. In this almost skeleton form they learned the French lines without too much effort, and put it with striking sincerity on the stage.

As Théophile was given on the same afternoon as Aucassin and Nicolette, we used the same stage set. We transformed the whole effect of it, however, by placing a cross at the top of the tower of Beaucaire, thus making it an abbey church, and by changing Nicolette's bower under the hill into a gaping Hell Mouth. Through its long-toothed gaping jaws (cut out of cardboard and painted by the art class) the Devil rose. And he was black, face, hands and all, with the smoke of Hell-fire.

Those of our modern audience whose knowledge of French was limited, or who might be confused by lapses in pronunciation, were told the story in a prologue, written by the children and here reproduced. Our English version, running parallel to the French, is more an adaptation than a translation. Aiming to preserve the spirit of the original, it is unchanged in structure and action.

PROLOGUE

Théophile, a bishop's officer, was a kind and humble man. He gave away his money to the poor who crowded his door to beg for alms. Because of his great piety he was chosen bishop at the former bishop's death. However, he refused this honor because of his great humility. The new bishop took away all Théophile's honors. His money gone to

the poor, Théophile soon repented of his refusal, and longed for distinction. Shame followed him everywhere, for people pointed at him as a man who had refused the mighty office of bishop. He slunk into corners, miserable and taunted at, raging against the bishop and despairing of life.

Salatin, a conjuror and an accomplice of the Devil, found him in this state, and with soft words tempted him to renounce God and all the saints, and thus win back his honors. Théophile was torn between his devotion to God and a great longing for riches and power. When at last he yielded, Salatin gloated over his prey.

Salatin conjured the Devil from the jaws of Hell with "Hebrew" words, and told him of his victory over a clerk. Great was Satan's triumph when he held between his palms the hands of Théophile's, thus making him the Devil's man. He made oath to renounce God and all the saints. He swore to give alms to none, to eschew good and to do evil. And he signed a Charter in which he relinquished his soul to Hell, in return for the Devil's help in this world.

The bishop, repenting of his harshness to Théophile, told Pince-guerre his clerk to summon Théophile, to whom he would restore all his honors. Théophile met first the little clerk and afterwards the bishop with such harsh and evil words that the bishop wondered, and gently rebuked him. Then Théophile repented that he had become the Devil's liege man. He entered the Virgin's chapel and began praying before her image. Our Lady was silent, and he prayed despairingly. At last she asked him who he

was. When Théophile gave her his name, she told him to leave her chapel. But he prayed to her so fervently that she forgave and rescued him. She demanded that Satan give up the charter which doomed Théophile. The Devil retorted that he would sooner be hanged; but Mary snatched it from him and returned it to Théophile, who brought it to his bishop in all humility.

THE MIRACLE OF THÉOPHILE

Characters

Our Lady
Théophile
Salatin
The Devil
The Bishop
Pince-guerre

THE MIRACLE OF THÉOPHILE

THÉOPHILE:

Ahi, ahi! Glorious King
Whom I have served in everything;
I've so much given that all's lost,
Fed the poor at my sole cost
Till no groat is left from the wreck . . .!
"Now," quoth the Bishop, "you're in check."
Mated he had me in a trice.
Worn and wretched, I am twice
Torn by pain and poverty.
Eyes down, lest some face I see,
I fear to sit with the well-born
Whose fingers point me out in scorn.
What shall I do? Whom shall I heed?
For God hath played me false indeed.
(*Théophile meets Salatin.*)

SALATIN:

What ho! What ails you, Théophile?
By God the great, what rage can deal
So ill with you, make you so sad
Who hitherto were strong and glad?

THÉOPHILE:

I was called "master" and "my lord"
Throughout this land, from hill to ford.

They have left me naught, I trow.
Salatin, I'm wroth; and now,
Howsoever hard, there's naught,—
Nor with whatever danger fraught,—
But that deed I will achieve,
My rightful honors to retrieve.
Their loss is injury and shame. . . .

SALATIN:

Fair sir, you speak in wisdom's name.

THÉOPHILE:

Salatin, my fair, sweet friend,
Nigh breaks my heart, and there's an end.

SALATIN:

Will you renounce and turn away
From God, to whom no more you'll pray,
Nor yet to martyr or to saint?
Hands joined, in faith without a taint,
Fealty you'll swear to one that will
Again your cup with honors fill?

THÉOPHILE:

I'll do your pleasure suddenly.

SALATIN:

Depart in stillness, so you be
Hither returnèd with the dawn.

THÉOPHILE:

Salatin, I am your pawn.

(*Théophile departs, thinking of how grave a matter it is to deny God. Salatin now summons the Devil, at the Mouth of Hell.*)

SALATIN:

A Christian's yielded himself here.
Hard, Satan, is his lot!
An thou await him, he'll appear.
Thou hearkenest not?

(*Now Salatin conjures the Devil.*)
Bagahi, baca bachahé
Lamac cahi achababé,
Karrelyos.
Lamac lamec bachalyos
Cabahagi sabalyos
Baryolas.
Lagozatha cabyolas
Samahac et famyolas,
Harrahya!
(*The Devil, thus conjured, appears.*)

THE DEVIL:
Thou hast well said those words of Hell.
Thy master taught thee the whole spell.
It torments me like a flame.

SALATIN:
Wilt list? I'll tell thee a new game.
We have a clerk.

THE DEVIL: What is his name?

SALATIN: Théophile, a man of fame.

THE DEVIL:
With him I've fought and all his band,
Nor e'er could get the upper hand.
Since now he yields him at command,
Send him within this vale
Unhorsed, sans friend to tell the tale.
He'll serve us well, nor thanks shall lack
From me, Hell's lord, or my lowest black.
But if he call upon
Jesus, Saint Mary's heavenly son,
He may not gain our meanest aid.
Now courteous be: for three months' time
Obsess me not with any rime,

—Go, Salatin!—
Either in Hebrew or in Latin.
(*Now Salatin seeks Théophile, who comes in great fear.*)

THE DEVIL: Forward! Hither! Come, make speed.

THÉOPHILE:
My lord, I do beseech and plead
That you relieve me in my need.

THE DEVIL: On me thou call'st?

THÉOPHILE: Yea.

THE DEVIL:
Place thine hands,
So, 'twixt mine; become my man.
Past ambition's furthest span
I'll requite thee. Yet one thing
More to cut short all bargaining,—
A scroll with pendent seal at the end.

THÉOPHILE: Behold!
(*Théophile gives his scroll to the Devil.*)

THE DEVIL:
Now, kind, sweet friend,
Hearken to my wisdom's treasure-trove:
Villeins never shalt thou love.
If poor men flock about thy door,
See that they get thine alms no more,
For giving alms and praying God
Smite me like many a stinging rod.
Eschew the good, and do thou ill.

THÉOPHILE: All that I should do, that I will.
(*They go out. The Bishop sends Pince-guerre to find Théophile.*)

THE BISHOP:
Haste and arise, my Pince-guerre:
Théophile search out in his lair.
For I must give his honors back.

Folly swayed me when, alack,
His goods I added to my hoard.

PINCE-GUERRE: Sooth speaks my very fair, sweet lord.
(*Pince-guerre goes to Théophile.*)
Who's there?

THÉOPHILE: And you are—what?

PINCE-GUERRE: A clerk.

THÉOPHILE: And I a priest, God wot.

PINCE-GUERRE:

Théophile, fair sir and dear,
Scorn me not so. You shall appear
Before my lord who would restore
Your prebend. Ha! What would you more?

THÉOPHILE:

The Devil's hand I see in this.
I'll hear the Bishop's words, I wis.
(*The Bishop rises and goes to meet Théophile, and restores his dignities.*)

THE BISHOP: Sir, you are welcome from disgrace.

THÉOPHILE:

Welcome indeed! I know my place.
I have not fallen in the race.

THE BISHOP:

Fair sir, of all that I have done
'Gainst you, I do repent like one
In sackcloth. All amends I'll make.
Your stolen charge accept, and take.

THÉOPHILE:

Villeins come now, ten by ten,
Suppliant to me. Ne'er again
Mercy I'll show them in their woe.
Seeds of evil I will sow.

THE BISHOP:

Théophile, not evil seeds!

Fair friend, think on kindly deeds.

(*Théophile repents. He goes to a Chapel of Our Lady, and prays.*)

THÉOPHILE:

All frail and sorrowing, ah, whither am I bound?
O Earth, how canst thou bear my weight upon the ground?
God nor his blessed saints dare I to supplicate:
Hands joined I've homage paid unto Hell's potentate.
But, Lady very sweet, dearly beloved of all,
For mercy at thy throne, repentant let me call.

(*Théophile prays to Our Lady.*)

Ah, holy Queen so fair,
Maiden so debonaire,
Most blessed and all glorious
Sans whom no mercy comes to us;
Abounding spring most virtuous,
Delectable and pure, Oh Queen,
Thy servant have I been.
Alas, Hell's mouth gapes wide!
My soul, where can it hide,
From Satan's burning ire?
Jewel of heavenly fire,
Woman of pity rare,
Virgin, hear my prayer;
My soul and body vile
From Hell's consuming guile
Recall—and reconcile—
From flames forever burning.
Lady, your dear Son prays
That you my soul upraise.

OUR LADY: Who art thou, there? Ho! Go thy ways!

THÉOPHILE:

Lady, have mercy past all earning,

On Théophile, the hapless one,
Whom once you cherished as your son.
Queen of the sky——

OUR LADY:

For words of thine what now care I?
Away, nor bide my chapel nigh.

THÉOPHILE:

I dare not! Oh!
Flower of eglantine and rose
In whom God's Son doth still repose,
Where can I go?

OUR LADY:

In truth, poor Théophile, 'tis known
In other days thou wast mine own.
I'll claim thy scroll. Stay thou alone
While I am gone.
(*Our Lady goes to get Théophile's scroll.*)
Satan, ha! Art caught in the murk?
Give up the writing of my clerk.
With it thou'st wrought too evil work.
(*Satan appears.*)

SATAN:

I give it back!
Torture me rather on the rack!—
His prebend I returned. He gave
Himself freely—in the grave—
With rightful claim
To goods and body, and soul the same.

OUR LADY:

And I, I trample upon thy paunch.
(*Our Lady brings the scroll to Théophile.*)
My friend, thy scroll is here. Be staunch
For joy or dole.
Go to the Bishop; straight unroll

Before him all thine unsealed scroll.
My church within,
Naught omitting, let proclaim thy sin.

THÉOPHILE:

Lady, dispose
My every deed. In ceaseless woes
Man loses all when thus he sows.
I see it well.
(*Théophile goes to the Bishop, and delivers up the scroll.*)
Torn out of Hell,
My scroll recounts what Satan said.
'Tis sealed as he requirèd.
He wronged me so
My heart did almost break. But lo,
The Virgin brought this from below!
(*The Bishop reads the scroll.*)

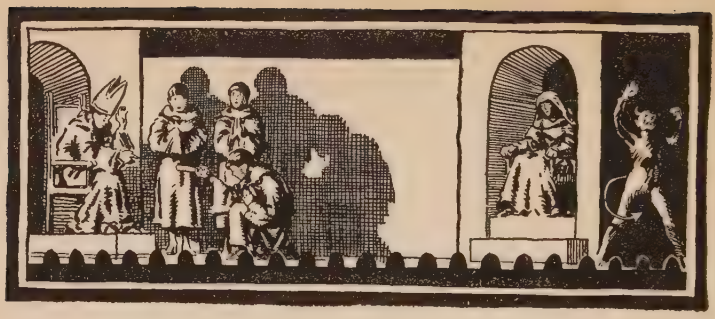
THE BISHOP:

Hark ye! 'Fore God, son of Mary,
True as Christ sprang from Jesse's tree,
Is all you see.
God's blessèd maid,
Mary the Virgin whom he prayed,
From Hell hath brought him unafraid.
Wherefore arise,
Let your Te Deum pierce the skies.
(*They sing the Te Deum, and go out in procession, still singing.*)

LE MIRACLE DE THÉOPHILE

Personnages

NOTRE-DAME
THÉOPHILE
SALATIN
LE DIABLE
L'ÉVÊQUE
PINCE-GUERRE



LE MIRACLE DE THÉOPHILE

THÉOPHILE:

Ahi! Ahi! Dieu, roi de gloire,
Tant je vous ai eu en mémoire
(Tout ai donné et dépensé
Et tout ai aux pauvres jeté)
Ne me reste vaillant un sac.
Bien m'a dit l'évêque: Échec!
Et m'a rendu mâté en l'angle.
Las et chétif je suis ès lacs
De pauvreté et de souffrance.
Je n'oserai personne voir,
Entre gens ne devrai m'asseoir,
Car l'on me montrerait au doigt.
Or ne sais-je que faire dois.
Dieu m'a bien servi fourberie.
(*Ici vient Théophile à Salatin, qui parlait au diable quand il voulait.*)

SALATIN:

Qu'est-ce? Qu'avez-vous, Théophile?
Pour le grand Dieu! Quel mautalent*
Vous a fait être si dolent?
Avant vous étiez si joyeux.

* colère.

THÉOPHILE:

On m'appelait seigneur et maître
De ce pays, ce sais-tu bien;
Or on ne me laisse plus rien.
J'en suis bien dolent, Salatin,
Or il n'est chose si sévère,
Ni de si étrange manière
Que je ne fasse volontiers
Telle que je rentre en mes honneurs.
Les perdre m'est honte et dommage.

SALATIN:

Beau sire, vous parlez comme un sage.

THÉOPHILE:

Salatin, beau très doux ami,
Peu s'en faut le cœur ne m'en crève.

SALATIN:

Voudriez-vous Dieu renier,
Celui que tant savez prier,
Tous ses saints et toutes ses saintes?
Ainsi deviendriez, mains jointes,
L'homme de celui qui ce ferait,
Qui tous vos honneurs vous rendrait.

THÉOPHILE:

Ton plaisir ferai brèvement.

SALATIN:

Allez-vous-en tranquillement.
Revenez demain au matin.

THÉOPHILE:

Volontiers, frère Salatin.
(*Or se départ Théophile de Salatin et pense que c'est chose très grave renier Dieu. Salatin parle au Diable.*)

SALATIN:

Un chrétien s'est sur moi remis,
Ouis-tu, Satan?

Demain viendra, si tu l'attends.
(*Ici conjure Salatin le Diable.*)
Bagahi baca bachahé
Lamac cahi achabahé
Karrelyos.
Lamac lamec bachalyos
Cabahagi sabalyos
Baryolas.
Lagozatha cabyolas
Samahac et famyolas
Harrahya.
(*Or vient le Diable qui est conjuré.*)

LE DIABLE:
Cil qui t'apprit rien n'oublia.
Moult me travailles.

SALATIN:
Veux-tu ovïr un jeu nouvel?
Un clerc avons.

LE DIABLE: Comment a nom?

SALATIN: Théophile, par son vrai nom.

LE DIABLE:
J'ai toujours eu avec lui guerre
Onques ne le pus conquérir.
Puisqu'il se veut à nous offrir,
Vienne en ce val,
Sans compagnie et sans cheval;
Moult aurai bien de lui merci;
Moi Satan et les autres noirs,
Mais qu'il n'appelle
Jésus, le fils Sainte Marie
Car nous ne lui ferions point d'aide.
Or, soyez vers moi plus courtois
Sans m'obséder d'ici des mois
(Va, Salatin)

Ni en hébreu, ni en latin.

(*Salatin cherche Théophile. Ici va Théophile au Diable, et a grand'peur.*)

LE DIABLE: Venez avant, pressez grand pas.

THÉOPHILE:

Or vous viens clamer et prier
Que vous m'aidiez en ce besoin.

LE DIABLE: M'en requiers-tu?

THÉOPHILE: Oui.

LE DIABLE:

Or joins
Tes mains et si deviens mon homme:
Je t'aiderai outre raison.
Et puisque telle chose advient,
Sache de voir qu'il te convient
Que de toi j'aie lettres pendantes.*

THÉOPHILE: Vois les ci, je les ai écrites.

(*Or baille Théophile les lettres au Diable.*)

LE DIABLE:

Théophile, beau doux ami
Je te dirai que tu feras:
Si pauvre demande à ta porte
Prends garde qu'aumône n'emporte.
Aumône faire et Dieu prier
Rien ne peut si fort m'ennuyer.
Laisse le bien et fais le mal.

THÉOPHILE:

Je ferai ce que faire dois.

(*Ils sortent. Alors l'Évêque envoie quérir Théophile.*)

L'ÉVÊQUE:

Or tôt! Lève-toi, Pince-guerre,
Si me va Théophile quérir,
Car je lui veux rendre sa charge.

* D'où pend un sceau.

J'avais fait moult grande folie
Quand je lui avais enlevée.

PINCE-GUERRE:

Vous dites-vrai, beau très doux sire.
(*Or parle Pince-guerre à Théophile*)
Qui est céans?

THÉOPHILE: Et vous qui êtes?

PINCE-GUERRE: Je suis un clerc.

THÉOPHILE: Et moi un prêtre.

PINCE-GUERRE:

Théophile, beau sire cher,
Or ne soyez vers moi si fier,
Mon seigneur un peu vous demande,
Jà vous r'aurez votre prébende.

THÉOPHILE:

Le diable y puisse part avoir!
J'irai ouïr ce qu'il dira.
(*Or se lève l'Évêque à la rencontre de Théophile, et lui rend sa dignité.*)

L'ÉVÊQUE: Sire, soyez le bien venu.

THÉOPHILE:

Je le suis, je sais me tenir:
Je ne suis pas tombé en route.

L'ÉVÊQUE:

Beau sire, de ce que j'avais
Fait contre vous, je vous l'amende,
Et ci vous rends moult bonnement
Votre baillie!* or la prenez.

THÉOPHILE:

Désormais viendront dix par dix
Les vilains pour me supplier
Et je les ferai bien pâtir.
Je leur serai dur et mauvais.

* Charge.

L'ÉVÊQUE:

Théophile, que dites-vous là?
Beau ami, pensez à bien faire.
(*Ici se repent Théophile, et vient à une chapelle de Notre-Dame.*)

THÉOPHILE:

Hélas! chétif! dolent! que pourrai devenir?
Terre, comment me peux porter et soutenir.
Je n'ose Dieu réclamer, ni ses saints ni ses saintes,
Las! car j'ai fait hommage au diable, les mains jointes.
Je n'ose Dieu ni ses saintes, ni ses saints réclamer:
Mais la très douce Dame que chacun doit aimer,
Si je lui crie merci, nul ne m'en doit blâmer.
(*C'est la prière que Théophile dit devant Notre-Dame.*)

O sainte reine belle,
Glorieuse pucelle,
Dame de grâce pleine,
Par qui tout bien arrive,
Abondante fontaine
Et délectable et saine,
À ton fils me rappelle.
À l'enfer est offerte
Dont la porte est ouverte,
M'âme par mon outrage.
Resplendissante gemme,
Tendre et piteuse femme,
Or entends ma prière,
Et mon vil corps et m'âme,
De perdurable flamme
Les rappelle en arrière.
Dame, ton cher fils prie
Que je sois délivré.

NOTRE-DAME: Qui es-tu, hé! qui vas par ci?

THÉOPHILE:

Ha! Dame, ayez de moi merci!
Tu me tins jadis pour ton fils,
O reine belle.

NOTRE-DAME:

Je n'ai cure de ta parole
Va t'en et sors de ma chapelle.

THÉOPHILE:

Dame, je n'ose.
Fleur d'églantier et lys et rose
En qui le fils Dieu se repose,
Que puis-je faire?

NOTRE-DAME:

Théophile, bien l'ai-je su
Qu'autrefois à moi je t'ai eu.
Ta charte te ferai r'avoir
Que tu baillas par non savoir:
La vais quérir.
(*Ici va Notre Dame pour la charte de Théophile.*)
Satan! Satan es-tu en serre?
Rends la charte que du clerc as
Car tu as fait trop vilain cas.

SATAN:

Je vous la rende!
J'aime assez mieux que l'on me pende.
Jà lui rendis-je sa prébende,
Et il me fit de lui offrande,
Sans demeurance,
De corps et d'âme et de substance.

NOTRE-DAME:

Et moi je te foulerai la panse.
(*Ici Notre-Dame apporte la charte à Théophile.*)
Ami, ta charte te rapporte.
À moi entends:
Va à l'Évêque et plus n'attends;

De la charte lui fais présent,
Et qu'il la lise
Devant le peuple en sainte église.

THÉOPHILE:

Volontiers, Dame:
Bien fusse mort de corps et d'âme;
Sa peine perd qui ainsi sème,
Ce vois-je bien.
(*Ici vient Théophile à l'Évêque, et lui baille sa charte.*)
Ma charte porte tout ce qu'il dit,
Scellé fut tout ce qu'il requit:
Moult me grèva,
Et le cœur presque me creva.
La Vierge me la rapporta!
(*Ici lit l'Évêque la charte.*)

L'ÉVÊQUE:

Oyez, pour Dieu le fils Marie.
Aussi vrai comme est évangile
Est cette chose.
Délivré l'a tout à bandon
La Dieu ancelle;*
Et Marie, la vierge pucelle,
L'a sauvé de telle querelle:
Chantons tous pour cette nouvelle.
Or levez-vous;
Disons: Te Deum laudamus.
(*Ils entonnent le Te Deum, forment une procession et sortent toujours chantant.*)

REFERENCES

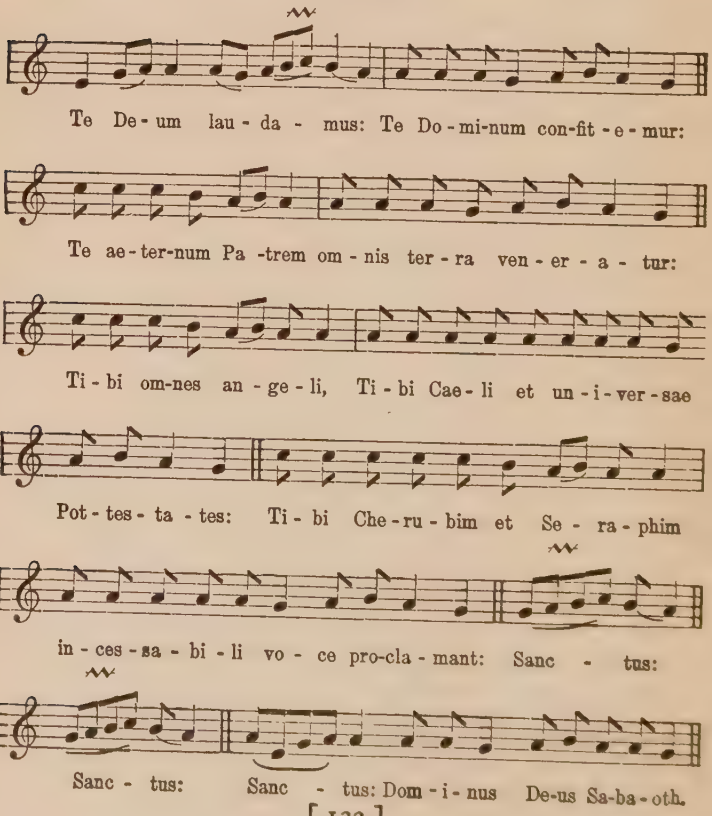
Text: 1. Trois Légendes du Moyen Age, by Remy de Gourmont (in modernized French verse; this version used for our play); published by Albert Messein, Paris, 1919. This volume also contains the legends of Sainte Madeleine and of Saint Nicolas.

*La servante de Dieu.

2. Le Théâtre Religieux en France du XI^e^ au XIII^e^ siècle, by A. Jeanroy (in modernized French prose); published by E. de Boccard, Paris, 1924.
3. English text by Henry Copley Greene.

Music: The Te Deum sung at the end of the play was taken from Kyriale seu Ordinarium Missae, Catholic Education Series, Music Fourth Year, p. 133, Catholic Education Press, Washington, D. C. We print it below in modern notation. For help in interpreting this notation, see the suggestions under Music: 1, p. 107.

TE DEUM


Te De - um lau - da - mus: Te Do - mi-num con-fit - e - mur:
Te ae - ter-num Pa - trem om - nis ter - ra ven - er - a - tur:
Ti - bi om-nes an - ge - li, Ti - bi Cae - li et un - i - ver - sae
Pot - tes - ta - tes: Ti - bi Che - ru - bim et Se - ra - phim
in - ces - sa - bi - li vo - ce pro-cla - mant: Sanc - tus:
Sanc - tus: Sanc - tus: Dom - i - nus De-us Sa-ba - oth.

AUCASSIN AND NICOLETTE

The chante-fable or song-story of Aucassin and Nicolette, known in only one manuscript, is unique in its structure. No other story remains to us, from the Middle Ages, in this alternating form of song and spoken narrative. Few stories, moreover, present so vivid a series of dramatic scenes. It seems, indeed, almost as if Aucassin and Nicolette had first been written as a play or dramatic chronicle, and had then been transposed by some minstrel or jongleur.

Now false to fact as this supposition may well be, it furnishes us with a clue. Following it, one easily translates scene after scene back, as it were, into dramatic form. And the result is less a drama, in any strict sense, than what the Elizabethans called a chronicle-play. This chronicle, however, presents events, not of history but of fable; it pictures the adventures of idyllic lovers in a Provence as fair and free as fairyland.

Dating from the late twelfth or early thirteenth century, Aucassin and Nicolette was written when the almost pagan relations between men and women were denounced by a church dominated by monastic ideas.

These almost pagan relations, on the other hand, were gradually altered, in form if not always in fact, by the ideals of chivalry. The new position and especially the courtly ideal of women was, indeed, so transformed that even the church adopted it. Marriage, which theologians had often regarded as a mere concession to the flesh, was more and more accepted as the symbol of union between Christ and his Church. The marriage ceremony was transferred from the church porch to the interior. And in cathedral windows Our Lady took the place of Christ at the top of the Tree of Jesse.

In spirit the unknown author of Aucassin and Nicolette belongs to the earlier period of this transition. Not for him is the worship of deified womanhood sung by Gauthier de Coincy in his Miracles of Our Lady. Wholly pagan is the speech in which, through the mouth of Aucassin, he extols Hell as the final home of brave knights and fine ladies. But the relation which he depicts between Aucassin and Nicolette is no longer pagan. Frank and joyous as anything in classic literature, their love is transformed by chivalric ideals. In them the faithfulness and courtesy of chivalry are real. Their faithfulness is simple like the truth; their courtesy as spontaneous as love.

It would be easy nowadays to sentimentalize this theme. The author of Aucassin and Nicolette could not. He was true to the Middle Ages in not knowing the sentimental taint. His story, therefore, appeals to children to-day; and they throw themselves into acting it as a play.

The ninth grade children of our French classes acted

Aucassin and Nicolette in the French version. This version is based on the eighteenth century translation by Sainte-Palaye, which preserves the metrical character of the original better than most versions in more modern French. To keep the old meter still more exactly and also to recapture some of the lost flavor of the original, we have modified the Sainte-Palaye translation considerably. In so doing we have followed the Old French text in Mr. F. W. Bourdillon's second edition. In our parallel English play, we have usually quoted from Mr. Bourdillon's translation.

In our play, just as in the song-story, a Jongleur acts a part not unlike that of a Greek chorus. He sings the brief introduction and certain transitional passages. But instead of telling the whole story in spoken words, he speaks only a few passages of narrative. For the rest, the successive scenes pass in action before our eyes. And the Jongleur, motionless below the castle tower of Beaucaire, stands as a silent reminder of his predecessors, the jongleurs who told this story in castle halls eight centuries ago.

Besides the Jongleur's songs, certain other verses, as indicated in the original song-story, were also sung; for example, Aucassin's Song to the Star. These verses were sung to the music reproduced by Mr. Bourdillon in the edition to which we have already referred. This single melody, in the mixolydian mode, consists of three phrases. The lines of a stanza are sung alternately to the first two of these phrases, until the final line is reached. That line is then sung to the third musical phrase, which completes the melody. The effect of a single tune repeated at intervals

throughout a play might well be monotonous. This old melody, however, returns again and again, with the charm of a refrain, to unify the tone of the whole play.

The stage set for the play has already been described in the introduction. We need therefore only remind you of the triple stage—with the towers of Beaucaire and of the Viscount's castle on projecting platforms right and left, and with a far-away hill at the back of the wide stage which unites these platforms behind.* We found that this arrangement made possible an unbroken series of scenes in which the action moved as by magic from Beaucaire, for example, to a forest and from the forest to a region near the sea. Thus Nicolette, from her prison tower, wandered back toward the hill, rested in the bower under it, climbed over it, and disappeared. Thus Aucassin rode in search of her through a region behind the castle towers, met a peasant there, talked, parted and rode back to the hill and over it and down to Nicolette's abandoned bower. Action like this created an illusion of space and distance; so that when Aucassin and Nicolette met and, on their single horse, rode away together over the hill, and back and forth across the stage, and finally disappeared behind a castle tower, we could well believe the Jongleur's story. In our imagination they reached a distant shore where pirates seized and parted them, and carried them off in separate ships.

Just because the means were not realistic, but were simple and symbolic, the illusion of distance in such journeyings was real. And the illusion was complete once more, when the prow of a boat appeared in pro-

* See cut, p. xvii.

file below the castle tower, and when this dragon-prowed boat, with Nicolette aboard, glided toward the center of the stage and stopped for her to land and mount the steps leading to the Castle of Beaucaire.

Our boat was like the ships in the Bayeux tapestry. Cut out of beaverboard, it was painted with horizontal stripes and with a silvered prow and stern, rising above the rest, shaped like a dragon's head and tail. It was mounted on a low wheeled platform which it completely masked. On this little platform sat Nicolette, head and shoulders above the gunwale of her boat, while (with one foot on the floor) she kept it gliding evenly toward Beaucaire.

Our steed was just a hobbyhorse, but a hobbyhorse of an ancient and fiery race. Cut out of beaverboard (like the boat), his head and shoulders and prancing fore legs were copied exactly from the head and fore quarters of a mediaeval knight's charger. Painted purple, with a silver mane and bridle, and mounted at the end of a purple pole, this steed of Aucassin's was as unrealistic as any stage horse could conceivably be. And yet, or rather just because it was so unrealistic, it became vigorously and vividly symbolic. Aucassin walked and trotted him in good control across the stage. A grotesquely hideous peasant stepped forward, and the horse shied. Aucassin reined him in; and as he forced that spirited steed, careening and pawing the ground, to meet the hideous peasant face to face, one could almost hear the snorting and the champing at the bit. And later when Aucassin tethered him beside the Bower, and when Nicolette stood patting him on the neck, the horse became as living as any person in the play.

AUCASSIN AND NICOLETTE

Characters

JONGLEUR
COUNT GARIN OF BEAUCAIRE
AUCASSIN, *his only son*
THE VISCOUNT OF THE TOWN
NICOLETTE, *his goddaughter, bought from the Saracens*
THE COUNT OF VALENCE, *enemy of Garin*
THE WARDER OF THE CASTLE
TWO WATCHMEN
AN OXHERD
SARACENS
BARONS
A LADY
A KNIGHT

AUCASSIN AND NICOLETTE

Prologue

THE JONGLEUR (*singing*):

Who would list a goodly lay,
Pleasure of the old man's day,
Of two children, fair and feat,
Aucassin and Nicolette?
There is no man so distraught,
None so wretched, so foredone,
Sick with so great sickness none,
If he hear, shall not be cured,
So sweet it is——

Scene I

At the house of the Viscount.

(*The Viscount receives Garin.*)

GARIN: Sir Viscount! Now put away Nicolette your god-daughter! For now, through her, do I lose Aucassin, since he will not be a knight. And know well that if I can have hold of her I will burn her in a fire; and you yourself might have all fear for yourself!

VISCOUNT: Sir, it grieves me that he goes to her, or that he comes to her, or that he speaks to her. But since it is your will and your good pleasure, I will send her to such

a land and to such a country that nevermore shall he see her with his eyes.

GARIN: This you keep to! Great harm might come to you hereof.

(*He leaves. Nicolette enters. The Viscount seizes her and drags her into his tower, she ever gazing backward toward the Castle of Beaucaire.*)

JONGLEUR (*singing*):

Nicolette was put in ward,
In a vaulted chamber barred.
She looked o'er the forest-side,
Saw the roses opened wide,
And the birds that loudly cried,
Then as orphan she 'gan moan:

NICOLETTE (*singing from her tower*):

Aucassin, my liege young lord,
I'm your true love evermore,
And you do not me abhor.
All for you I'm put in ward,
But, by Mary's Holy Son,
Here for long I will not stay,
If fly I may.

AUCASSIN (*entering and meeting the Viscount*): Sir Viscount, what have you done with Nicolette, my most sweet friend, the thing in all the world that I loved best? Have you stolen her away from me?

VISCOUNT: Fair sir, now let be! If you should speak to her and if your father should learn thereof, he would burn us both alive, Nicolette and myself. And for all the days of the world would your soul be in Hell for it, since into Paradise you would never enter.

AUCASSIN: What have I to do in Paradise? I seek not to enter there; for to Paradise go none but such folk as I will tell you. There go the old priests, and the old

cripples, who grovel before the altars and in the old crypts. These go to Paradise; but to Hell will I go. For to Hell go the fine clerks, and the fine knights who have died in tourneys and in rich wars, and the players of harps, and the minstrels, and the kings of the world.

VISCOUNT: Assuredly, to no purpose will you speak of it, for never more will you see her.

(*He leaves Aucassin grieving.*)

AUCASSIN (*singing*):

Nicolette, of beauteous bearing,
Beauteous coming and forth-faring,
Beauteous laughing, beauteous playing,
My distress is past allaying;
In such pain I draw my breath
I thereof am near to death,
Sister, sweet friend.

(*He goes slowly to Beaucaire.*)

SCENE II

The Castle of Beaucaire.

JONGLEUR: Meanwhile the Count of Valence, who had his war to accomplish, forgot not, but summoned his men on foot and on horse, and went to assault the castle of Beaucaire.

GARIN (*entering, finding Aucassin grieving*): Ah, son! How art thou feeble and unhappy, that seest them thus assault my castle? But know that if thou lost it thou art disinherited. Son, now take arms, and mount horse, and defend thy land.

AUCASSIN: Father, give me Nicolette, my sweet friend, whom I love so much!

GARIN: Son, that cannot be.

AUCASSIN: Father, I will make good covenants with you.

GARIN: And what, fair son?

AUCASSIN: I will go into battle, by these covenants—that if God bring me again safe and sound, you will let me see Nicolette, so long that I may speak two words or three to her, and that I may kiss her one single time.

GARIN: I grant it.

JONGLEUR (*singing*):

Aucassin heard of the kiss
On returning to be his.
Hundred thousand marks pure gold
Had made him less blithe and bold.
Arms he called for, rich and rare;
They made ready for his wear.
He put on a hauberk lined,
Helmet on his head did bind,
Girt his sword with hilt pure gold,
Mounted on his charger bold.
His sweet friend, he thought on her.
To his charger clapped the spur;
Forth he springs full eagerly,
Right on to the gate rides he,
To join the fray.

The boy was tall and strong, and fair and well-grown, and the horse he rode was fleet and mettlesome. He puts his hand to his sword, and begins to strike to right and to left. He cleaves helms and nose-guards, fists and arms; overthrows ten knights and wounds seven. Then he finds the Count Bougars of Valence, strikes him through the helmet, seizes him and leads him a prisoner to his father.

Scene III

The Castle of Beaucaire

(*Aucassin, leading the Count of Valence, approaches his father.*)

Aucassin: Father, here is your enemy who has long warred on you and done you harm.

Garin: Fair son, you have entered upon chivalry!

Aucassin: Father, do not preach to me, but keep me your covenants.

Garin: Ho! What covenants, fair son?

Aucassin: Alas, father, have you forgotten them? Did you not promise me that you would let me see Nicolette? This word I will that you keep with me.

Garin: I? Ne'er help me Heaven if ever I keep such covenants with you.

Aucassin: Is this the end?

Garin: So help me Heaven, yes!

Aucassin: Certes, I am truly sorry to see how a man of your age lies! Count of Valence, I have taken you prisoner.

Count: Sir, verily.

Aucassin: Give me here your hand.

Count: Sir, willingly.

Aucassin: Pledge me that throughout your days you will at every turn molest my father and do him shame, in body and in goods.

Count: Before God, sir, mock me not.

Aucassin: How? Know you not that you are my prisoner?

Count: Sir, I know.

Aucassin: Then, ne'er help me Heaven if I make not your head to fly, an you pledge me it not.

Count: In God's name, I pledge you whatever you will.

(*Aucassin goes out, followed by the Count. Garin enters his castle.*)

JONGLEUR (*singing*):

Now when saw the Count Garin
As of his son Aucassin,
That he ne'er will separate
From bright-favored Nicolette,
In a prison he him set
In a dongeon underground.

Nicolette, on the other hand, was in her chamber. She saw the moon shine bright through the window, and heard the nightingale sing in the garden; and she bethought her of Aucassin her friend, whom she loved so much. She rose, took bed coverings and towels, and tied one to other and made a rope and descended into the garden. And the blossoms of the daisies which she broke off seemed black against her feet, so white was the maiden. She walked through the streets of Beaucaire until she came to the tower where her friend was.

SCENE IV

The Castle of Beaucaire.

(*Nicolette, speaking with Aucassin through a crack in the wall of his prison tower.*)

NICOLETTE (*singing*):

Aucassin, high-born, high-bred,
Proud and honorable child,
What avails your weeping wild,
What your moans and miseries?
For your sake I'll cross the sea,
Faring to some far country.

(*She cuts a tress of her hair and casts it into the dongeon.*)

AUCASSIN: Fair sweet friend, you shall not go, for then you would have slain me.

NICOLETTE: Aucassin, I believe not that you should love me

as much as you say. But I love you more than you love me.

AUCASSIN: Fair sweet friend, woman cannot love man as much as man loves woman!

(*The Two Watchmen enter stealthily, their swords drawn under their cloaks; for the Count Garin had commanded that if they could take her they should kill her.*)

WARDER (*appearing in the tower, singing*):

Maiden of the open heart
Thou hast spoken with thy fere.
'Ware thee yon rascality,
That come hither seeking thee,
'Neath the cloak the naked brand!
Quick they'll do thee a misdeed,
Save thou take heed!

(*Nicolette wraps her in her mantle in the shadow of the pillar, till the Watchmen are passed beyond. She takes leave of Aucassin. She makes the sign of the cross, and lets herself slip down into the moat.*)

NICOLETTE (*singing*):

Father, King of Majesty,
I know not which way to fly.
Should I to the greenwood hie,
There the wolves will me devour,
And the lion and wild boar,
Whereof yonder is great store.
Should I wait the daylight clear,
So that men should find me here,
Lighted will the fire bin
That my body will burn in.
But, O God of Majesty,
I had liefer yet fairly
That the wolves should me devour,
And the lion and wild boar,

Than into the city fare:
I'll not go there!

(*She goes out.*)

Scene V

In the Forest

Jongleur: The one part say that Nicolette is lost, and the others say that Count Garin has had her slain. Whoso had joy of it, Aucassin was not glad. And the Count Garin let take him out of prison.

(*Aucassin comes and leans against the tower, all sorrowful and downcast.*)

Knight (*leading a horse*): Go, divert yourself in the forest. There you will see herbs and flowers, and peradventure you shall hear such a word for the which you shall be the better.

(*He gives Aucassin his horse, and departs.*)

Aucassin (*singing*):

Nicolette, O lithe-limbed maid,
For your sake I thread the glade.
Stag nor boar do I pursue,
But your tracks I trace for you.
And our Father God so will,
I shall look upon you still,
Sister, sweet friend!

(*As he was riding along an old grassy road, he saw before him a tall man, terrible and ugly and hideous; he had a great head blacker than coal, and had more than a full palm breadth between his eyes; and he had great cheeks, and an immense flat nose, and great wide nostrils, and thick lips redder than a ruby, and great teeth, yellow and ugly. He was shod in boots of oxhide, with leggings laced with cord as far as above the knee. He was wrapped*

in a cloak with two wrong sides, and was leaning on a great club.)

OXHERD: For what are you weeping and making such sorrow? Certes, if I were as rich a man as you are, all the world would not make me weep.

AUCASSIN: How? Do you know me, then?

OXHERD: Yes, I know well that you are Aucassin, the son of the Count. And if you tell me for what you are weeping, I will tell you what I am doing here.

AUCASSIN: Certes, I will tell you right willingly. I came this morning to hunt in this forest, with a white greyhound, the most beautiful in the world, and I have lost it; for this I am weeping.

OXHERD: And you weep thus for a foolish dog! Cursed be he who does not mock at you, with your father so great a lord. But I have cause for weeping.

AUCASSIN: And for what, brother?

OXHERD: Sir, I will tell you. I was hired to a rich villein, and drove his plough. There were four oxen. It is now three days since I lost Roger, the best ox of my team. I have sought him everywhere for three days without food or drink, and I dare not go to the village for fear that they would put me in prison, since I have not wherewith to pay for him. Yet I weep not for this. But for you, curse him who ever again shall esteem you!

AUCASSIN: Fair brother, God bless you. What was thine ox worth?

OXHERD: Sir, they ask twenty sols.

AUCASSIN: See, here they are in my purse. Go, pay for thine ox.

OXHERD: Gramercy, sir. And may God grant you find that which you seek.

(*The Oxherd goes out.*)

Scene VI

In the Forest

(*Aucassin rode on. The night was fine and still, and he rode until he came to the bower that Nicolette had made, covered with flowers. When Aucassin perceived it, he stopped all in a moment.*)

Aucassin: Ah, Heaven! Here Nicolette has surely been, my sweet friend. It could be no other, who has made this bower with her beautiful hands. For the love of her will I alight here, and rest me this night through.

(*As he put his foot out of the stirrup to alight from his horse so big and high, he thought so much upon Nicolette his most sweet friend that he fell hard upon a stone so that his shoulder flew out of place. Although he felt himself to be much hurt, be bestirred himself the best he could, and tied his horse up with his other hand to a thorn; then he bent down and entered the bower. He gazed at the stars that shone in the sky, and seeing one brighter than all the others, he began to say:*)

Aucassin (*singing*):

Little star, I see thee there,
That the moon draws close to her.
Nicolette is with thee there,
My love of the yellow hair.
God, I trow, wants her in heaven,
To become His lamp of even.
Sister, sweet friend!

(*When Nicolette heard Aucassin, for she was not far, she ran to the bower, threw her arms about his neck, and kissed him.*)

Nicolette: Fair sweet friend, be you well met!

Aucassin: And you, fair sweet friend, be you well met! Ah, sweet friend, I was but now sore hurt in my shoulder;

and now I feel neither hurt nor pain, since I have you. (*She felt about him, and found that he had his shoulder out of place. She plied it so well with her white hands, and achieved, with God's will who loveth lovers, that it came again into place. Then, taking flowers and fresh herbs and green leaves, she bound them on with a piece torn from her robe, and he was quite healed.*)

NICOLETTE: Aucassin, fair sweet friend, take counsel what you will do. If to-morrow your father lets search this forest, and they find me,—whatever may become of you, they will surely kill me.

AUCASSIN: Certes, fair sweet friend, I am in despair. But if I be able, they shall never lay hold upon you.

(*He mounted his horse, and took his friend in front of him, and they set out into the open fields.*)

JONGLEUR (*singing*):

Aucassin, the fair, the blond,
High-born youth and lover fond,
Rode from out the deep forest;
In his arms his love he pressed.

NICOLETTE (*singing*):

Aucassin, my lover sweet,
In what land come we so fleet?

AUCASSIN (*singing*):

Naught it matters where we fly,
So I am with you alway.

JONGLEUR (*singing*):

Dawn brake as they the sea did reach
And alighted on the beach
'Longside the strand.

There came on suddenly a fleet of Saracens, by sea. They attacked from all sides and took Nicolette and Aucassin prisoners. They bound Aucassin hand and foot, and threw him into a ship; Nicolette was taken away in

another. There arose such a storm at sea that it parted them. The ship in which Aucassin was went drifting over the sea until at length it landed at the Castle of Beaucaire. There his father had died during his absence. (*singing*)

Aucassin did thus repair
To his city of Beaucaire.
All the kingdom and country
Holds throughout full peacefully.

Scene VII

Carthage

Jongleur: The Saracens with Nicolette sailed until they came under the city of Carthage, where the Saracens left her, bound, below the castle wall. On seeing the castle and the countryside, Nicolette remembered her childhood.

Nicolette (*singing*):

Woe is my high parentage,
Daughter of the King, Carthage:
Here me holds a savage horde,
Aucassin, my gentle lord,
Your sweet love constraineth me.
Grant me God the Heavenly
Yet to hold you in embrace;
Liege lord, my dear.

(*She frees herself.*)

Jongleur: She stole away and came to the port. There she found an herb, and smeared her face with it, so that she was all black and stained. She attired herself in the guise of a minstrel, procured a viol, went to a mariner and persuaded him to take her in his ship. They set their sails, and sailed over the high sea until they came to the coast of Provence. Nicolette went ashore, took her viol,

and went playing through the country, until she came to the castle where Aucassin was.

Scene VIII

The Castle of Beaucaire

(*Aucassin seats himself, surrounded by his barons. Nicolette enters in the guise of a minstrel.*)

Nicolette (*singing*):

List to me, proud lords, arow,
Those aloft and those below,
Would it please you hear my song?
Nicolette, the brave and true,
Is at Carthage, the castèl,
For her father loves her well,
Who of yonder land is lord.
Husband they will her award
Felon king of heathenesse.
Nicolette cares not for this,
For she loves a lording lad,
Aucassin to name he had.
By God and his name, she vows
Never lord will she espouse,
If she have not her true love
She holds so dear.

Aucassin: Fair sweet friend, know you aught of this Nicolette?

Nicolette: Sir, I know of her as the noblest, the gentlest, and the wisest, that was ever born.

Aucassin: Ah, fair sweet comrade, go back to that land, and tell her that I wait for her and that I will never have any wife save her.

Nicolette: Sir, do not lament. Within a little while I shall bring her to you.

Scene IX

The Castle of Beaucaire

Jongleur: Then Nicolette goes to the house of the Viscountess and tells her her secret. The Viscountess makes her as beautiful as ever she was. Then she sends a lady to seek Aucassin her love.

Lady: Aucassin, be not distraught, but come with me. Nicolette, your love, is come from far lands to find you.

(*Nicolette and Aucassin meet and embrace.*)

Jongleur (*singing*):

Take his bride did Aucassin,
Made her lady of Beaucaire,
Lives they led of pure delight;
Now his joy had Aucassin,
Likewise Nicolette the bright.
Finished my song-story, I
Can tell no more.

(*The Jongleur takes them by the hand, one on either side of him; they bow, and go out.*)

AUCASSIN ET NICOLETTE

Personnages

Jongleur
Le Comte Garin de Beaucaire
Aucassin, *son fils unique*
Le Vicomte de la Ville
Nicolette, *sa filleule, achetée aux Sarrasins*
Le Comte de Valence, *ennemi de Garin*
Le Guetteur du Château
Deux Soldats
Un Bouvier
Sarrasins
Barons
Une Dame
Un Chevalier

AUCASSIN ET NICOLETTE

Prologue

JONGLEUR (*chantant*) :

Qui voudrait bon vers ouïr,
Délices du vieux captif,
De deux beaux enfants petits,
Nicolette et Aucassin?
Nul homme n'est si ébahi
Tant dolent ni entrepris
De grand mal malade au lit,
Qui de l'ouïr ne soit guéri
Tant il est doux——

Scène I

Chez le vicomte

GARIN DE BEAUCAIRE : Sire vicomte, faites disparaître Nicolette. À cause d'elle, je perds Aucassin, qui ne veut pas devenir chevalier. Et sachez bien que si je puis m'emparer d'elle, je la ferai brûler vive, et vous même courrez grand danger.

LE VICOMTE : Sire, j'ai regret qu'Aucassin aille et vienne et cherche à lui parler. Mais, puisque c'est votre volonté et votre plaisir, je l'enverrai en tel pays et en tel lieu que jamais il ne la verra de ses yeux.

GARIN: Prenez garde à vous! Grand mal vous en pourrait advenir.

(*Il sort. Nicolette entre. Le vicomte la fait enfermer dans une chambre de l'étage le plus élevé de son beau palais.*)

JONGLEUR (*chantant*):

Nicole est en prison mise
En une chambre voûtée,
Elle regarde par la grille
Et voit la rose épanouie
Et les oiseaux qui se crient;
Lors se clama l'orpheline:

NICOLETTE (*de sa tour, chantant*):

Aucassin damoiseau sire
Je suis votre douce amie,
Et de vous suis point haïe:
Pour vous suis en prison mise
Mais par Dieu le fils Marie
Longuement n'y resterai
Si je l'puis faire.

(*Aucassin entre et s'approche du vicomte.*)

AUCASSIN: Sire vicomte, qu'avez-vous fait de Nicolette, ma très douce amie, la chose que j'aimais le plus au monde? Me l'avez-vous ravie?

LE VICOMTE: Beau sire, laissez cela. Si vous lui parlez et que votre père vint à le savoir, il nous brûlerait vifs, elle et moi, et pendant toute l'éternité votre âme serait en enfer, et vous n'entreriez jamais en paradis.

AUCASSIN: Qu'ai-je à faire en paradis? Je n'y désire entrer, car en paradis ne vont que telles gens que je vais vous dire: de vieux prêtres et de vieux manchots qui se tiennent devant les autels et dans les vieilles cryptes; ceux-là vont en paradis. Mais bien en enfer veux-je aller; car en enfer vont les beaux clercs et les beaux chevaliers qui sont morts

aux tournois et aux belles guerres, et les joueurs de harpe, et les jongleurs, et les rois du monde.

LE VICOMTE: Certes, vous en parlez en vain; jamais ne la reverrez.

(*Il quitte Aucassin.*)

AUCASSIN (*chantant*):

Nicolette, debout belle,
Allant, venant toujours belle,
Belle à rire et à jouer,
Pour vous je suis désolé,
Et si cruellement mené
Que j'en suis près d'expirer,
Sœur, douce amie.

(*Il va lentement vers Beaucaire.*)

SCÈNE II

Dans le château de Beaucaire

JONGLEUR: Lors le comte de Valence, ayant mandé ses hommes de cheval et de pied, se dirige vers le château de Garin de Beaucaire pour l'assaillir.

(*Garin entre. Il trouve Aucassin douloureux.*)

GARIN: Ha! fils, es-tu assez malheureux et faible de voir ains assaillir ton château? Or, sache bien, si tu le perds, que tu es déshérité. Fils, allons, prends tes armes, monte à cheval et défends ton bien.

AUCASSIN: Père, donnez-moi Nicolette, ma douce amie, que tant j'aime.

GARIN: Fils, ça ne peut être.

AUCASSIN: Père, je vous ferai une proposition.

GARIN: Laquelle, beau fils?

AUCASSIN: J'irai à la bataille, à la condition que si Dieu me ramène sain et sauf, vous me laisserez voir Nicolette, le temps de lui dire deux mots ou trois et de lui donner un seul baiser.

GARIN : Je l'octroie.

JONGLEUR (*chantant*) :

Aucassin oit du baiser
Qu'il aura au retourner,
Pour cent mille marcs d'or gagné,
N'eût pas été si enchanté.
Belles armures d'acier
On lui a appareillées :

Il vêtit un double haubert,
Lace son heaume à son chef :
Épée d'or met à son côté,
Et monte sur son destrier.
De s'amie lui souvient,
Éperonne son destrier,
Qui court moult volontiers.
Tout droit à la porte il vient
À la bataille.

(*Le jeune varlet est grand et fort, beau et bien fait, et le cheval qu'il chevauche vif et rapide. Il met la main à l'épée et commence à frapper à droite et à gauche. Il coupe heaumes et nasals, poings et bras; abat dix chevaliers, en navre sept, puis il avise le comte Bougars de Valence, le frappe sur son heaume, le saisit et l'emmène prisonnier à son père.*)

SCÈNE III

Dans le château de Beaucaire

AUCASSIN : Père, voici votre ennemi qui vous a tant fait guerre et mal.

GARIN : Beau fils, voilà comment tu dois débuter dans la chevalerie.

AUCASSIN : Père, ne sermonnez pas; tenez plutôt votre promesse.

GARIN: Hé! quelle promesse, beau fils?

AUCASSIN: Quoi, père, l'avez-vous oubliée? Ne m'avez-vous pas promis que vous me laisseriez voir Nicolette? Et je veux que vous me teniez parole.

GARIN: Moi! Que Dieu ne me vienne en aide si je tiens une pareille promesse.

AUCASSIN: Est-ce la fin?

GARIN: Si Dieu m'aide, oui.

AUCASSIN: Certes, je suis bien grandement fâché de voir qu'un homme de votre âge ment.—Comte de Valence, je vous ai fait prisonnier?

LE COMTE: Oui, sire, certainement.

AUCASSIN: Donnez-moi votre main.

LE COMTE: Sire, volontiers.

AUCASSIN: Me jurez-vous que, tout le temps que vous serez en vie, vous ferez honte ou dommage à mon père en son corps ou en ses biens?

LE COMTE: Pour Dieu, sire, ne vous moquez pas de moi.

AUCASSIN: Hé, ne reconnaissez-vous pas que vous êtes mon prisonnier?

LE COMTE: Sire, oui, je le reconnais.

AUCASSIN: Donc, Dieu ne m'aide jamais si je ne vous fais sauter la tête, à moins que vous ne me le juriez.

LE COMTE: Au nom de Dieu, je vous jure tout ce qu'il vous plaira.

(*Aucassin et le comte marchent l'un derrière l'autre pendant que le jongleur chante.*)

JONGLEUR (*chantant*):

Quand voit le comte Garin
De son enfant Aucassin
Qu'il ne pourra détacher
De Nicole au teint de lys,
En une prison il l'a mis,
Dans un caveau souterrain.

Nicolette était d'autre part en sa chambre. Elle vit la lune luire et elle entendit le rossignol chanter et il lui souvint d'Aucassin son ami, qu'elle aimait tant. Elle se leva, fit une corde des draps de son lit et des nappes et se laissa glisser en bas dans le jardin. Elle releva sa robe à cause de la rosée qu'elle vit sur l'herbe, et s'en alla le long du jardin. Et les fleurs des marguerites qu'elle brisait paraissaient toute noires en comparaison de ses pieds, tant était blanche la fillette. Elle sortit dans les rues de Beaucaire tant qu'elle arriva à la tour où était son ami.

Scène IV

Le château de Beaucaire

(*Nicolette parlant à travers une crevasse dans le mur du souterrain où Aucassin est prisonnier.*)

Nicolette (*chantant*) :

Aucassin gentil et fier,
Franc damoiseau honoré,
Que vous sert de lamenter,
De vous plaindre et de pleurer?
Pour vous passerai les mers,
J'irai en autre contrée.

(*Elle coupe une longue tresse qu'elle jette dans la prison.*)

Aucassin : Belle douce amie, vous ne vous en irez point, car vous causeriez ma mort.

Nicolette : Aucassin, je ne crois pas que vous m'aimiez autant que vous le dites; mais moi je vous aime plus que vous ne m'aimez.

Aucassin : Belle douce amie, femme ne peut tant aimer l'homme que l'homme aime la femme!

(*Deux soldats entrent sournoisement, l'épée nue sous le manteau; car le comte Garin leur a donné ordre de la mettre à mort. Le guetteur paraît au haut de la tour. Il se penche vers elle.*)

LE GUETTEUR (*chantant*):

Pucelle avec un cœur franc,
Parlé as à ton amant,
Garde-toi des gens méchants,
Qui par ci te vont quérant,
Sous les capes les nus brans!
Ils te feront messéant,
Si tu n'y garde.

(*Nicolette se serre dans sa mante à l'ombre du pilier, jusqu'à ce que les soldats aient passé outre et elle prend congé d'Aucassin. Elle fait le signe de la croix sur son visage et se laisse glisser dans le fossé.*)

NICOLETTE (*chantant*):

Père, Roi de Majesté,
Or ne sais quel part aller:
Si je vais au bois feuillé,
Ja me mangeront les loups,
Le lion et le sanglier,
Dont il y a grand quanté.
Si j'attends la matinée,
Que on me puis ci trouver,
Le feu sera allumé,
Mon corps sera embrasé.
Mais par Dieu de Majesté,
Encore mieux j'aimerai,
Que me mangeront les loups,
Le lion et le sanglier,
Que de rentrer en la cité,
Je n'irai pas. (*Elle sort.*)

SCÈNE V

Dans la forêt

JONGLEUR: Les uns disent que Nicolette est perdue, et les autres disent que le comte Garin l'a fait mourir. Si

quelqu'un en fut joyeux, Aucassin ne le fut guère. Et le comte Garin le fit sortir de prison.

(*Aucassin alla s'appuyer contre la tour tout dolent et abattu.*)

UN CHEVALIER (*menant un cheval par la bride*) : Allez vous ébattre au fond de la forêt. Là vous verrez herbes et fleurs, et par aventure vous entendrez telle parole dont mieux vous serez.

AUCASSIN (*chantant*) :

Nicolette au gentil corps,
Pour vous suis venu au bois,
Je ne chasse ni cerf ni porc,
Mais je suis sur vos talons.
Si Dieu plaît, le Père,
Je vous reverrai encore,
Sœur, douce amie.

(*Comme il suivait une ancienne route où l'herbe était haute, il voit dans le milieu un homme grand, terrible, laid et hideux; il avait une tête large, plus noire qu'un charbon, l'entre-deux de ses yeux avait une plaine paume de travers: avec cela il avait des joues d'une grandeur énorme, le nez prodigieusement gros et écrasé, d'amples narines toutes ouvertes, de grosses lèvres plus rouges qu'une escarboucle, de grandes dents jaunes et affreuses. Sa chaussure était des souliers de cuir de bœuf, des guêtres liées de cordes, qui lui montaient jusqu'au dessus du genou. Il était vêtu d'une capote à deux envers, et appuyait son corps sur une grande massue.*)

LE BOUVIER : Qu'avez-vous à pleurer, et de quoi vous affligez-vous tant? Certes, si j'étais aussi riche que vous êtes, tout le monde ne serait capable de me faire pleurer.

AUCASSIN : Et comment! me connaissez-vous si bien?

LE BOUVIER : Oui; je sais bien que vous êtes Aucassin le fils du

comte, et si vous me dites pourquoi vous pleurez, je vous dirai ce que je fais ici.

AUCASSIN: Certes, je vous le dirai très volontiers. Je suis venu ce matin chasser dans cette forêt avec un lévrier blanc le plus beau du monde, et j'ai eu le malheur de le perdre, c'est le sujet de mes pleurs.

LE BOUVIER: Oui, vraiment, c'est pour un vilain chien que vous pleurez ainsi. Maudit soit qui ne se moquera de vous, puisque votre père est si grand seigneur. J'ai bien un autre sujet de pleurer.

AUCASSIN: Quoi donc, frère?

LE BOUVIER: Je vous dirai, sire. Je servais un riche vilain, qui me confia quatre bœufs; il y a trois jours que j'ai perdu Roger, le meilleur bœuf de ma charrue. Je vais partout le cherchant depuis trois jours sans boire ni manger, et je n'ose rentrer dans le village, de crainte qu'on ne me mette en prison, car je n'ai pas un sol pour le payer. Ce n'est pas pour cela que je pleurerais: mais quoi, vous, maudit soit qui jamais vous priserait.

AUCASSIN: Beau frère, Dieu vous bénisse; que pouvait valoir ton bœuf?

LE BOUVIER: Sire, on en veut avoir vingt sols.

AUCASSIN: Tiens, les voici dans ma bourse, va payer ton bœuf.

LE BOUVIER: Grand merci, seigneur: le bon Dieu vous fasse trouver ce que vous cherchez.

SCÈNE VI

Dans la forêt

(*Le bouvier s'en va, et Aucassin continue de marcher. La nuit était belle et sereine, et tant il chemina qu'il arriva à le feuillée que Nicolette avait faite et tapissée de fleurs. Aucassin en ce voyant, s'arrêta tout court.*)

AUCASSIN: Ah! Dieu, il faut que Nicolette aît surement été

ici, c'est ma douce amie. Ce ne peut être une autre, qui de ses belles mains a tissé cette loge. Je veux pour l'amour d'elle descendre ici, et je m'y reposerai la nuit.

(*Comme il mettait le pied hors de l'étrier pour descendre du cheval qui était grand et haut, il vint à penser à Nicolette sa très douce amie, et se laissa tomber si rudement sur une roche, qu'il se démit l'épaule. Quoiqu'il se sentit bien blessé, il fit tant que de l'autre main il attacha son cheval à un buisson d'épines du mieux qu'il put; ensuite se détournant un peu, il entra en se baissant dans la loge. Il considéra les étoiles qui luisaient au firmament, et dont une brillait sur toutes les autres: à l'instant il commence à dire:*)

AUCASSIN (*chantant*) :

Étoile qu'ici je vois
Que la lune tire à soi,
Nicolette est avec toi,
M'amiette au blond poil.
Dieu, je pense, veut l'avoir
Pour sa lumière du soir.
Sœur, douce amie.

(*Quand Nicolette, qui n'était pas loin, eut entendu Aucassin, elle courut à la loge les bras ouverts, se jeta à son col, le baisa, et l'embrassa.*)

NICOLETTE : Beau doux ami, soyez le bien retrouvé.

AUCASSIN : Et vous, belle douce amie, soyez la bien retrouvée. Ah! douce amie, tout à l'heure j'étais bien blessé à l'épaule, je ne sens plus ni mal ni douleur depuis que je vous tiens.

(*Elle le tâte partout, et trouve qu'il a l'épaule déboîtée. Elle le mania tant avec ses belles mains, et fit tant, avec l'aide de Dieu, qui assiste toujours les amants, que l'épaule fut remise à sa place; puis prenant des fleurs et de l'herbe fraîche, et des feuilles vertes qu'elle enveloppa et attacha avec un pan de sa chemise, elle le guérit parfaitement.*)

NICOLETTE : Aucassin, beau doux ami, il faut songer maintenant

à ce que vous ferez. Si demain votre père fait visiter cette forêt, et qu'on m'y trouve, quoi que de vous on fasse, il n'est pas douteux que pour moi on me fera mourir.

AUCASSIN: Certes, belle douce amie, j'en serais au désespoir; mais si je puis, ils ne vous attraperont pas.

(*Il monte sur son cheval, prend s'amie devant lui, et ils s'en vont à travers champs.*)

JONGLEUR (*chantant*):

Aucassin, le beau, le blond,
Le gentil et amoureux,
Est sorti du bois profond,
Entre ses bras ses amours.

NICOLETTE (*chantant*):

Aucassin, mon ami doux,
En quelle terre irons-nous?

AUCASSIN (*chantant*):

Moi ne caut ou nous aillons,
Je suis toujours avec vous.

JONGLEUR (*chantant*):

À la mer arrivent au jour,
Et descendent sur le sablon,
Près du rivage.

Voici, venir une escadre de Sarrasins qui prirent Nicolette et Aucassin. Ils lièrent Aucassin par les mains et par les pieds, le jetèrent dans une barque; Nicolette dans une autre fut aussi enlevée. Une horrible tempête les surprit en chemin. La barque qui portait Aucassin, après avoir longtemps vogué çà et là à travers les mers, fut enfin poussée contre le château de Beaucaire. Ici son père était mort pendant tout ce temps là.

(*Chantant*):

Aucassin s'en est allé
À Beaucaire, sa cité,
Le pais et le regné
Tint très tout en quietée.

Scène VII

Carthage

Jongleur: Les Sarrasins et Nicolette naviguent tant qu'ils arrivèrent dessous Carthage. À la vue des murs du château et à la vue du pays, Nicolette se reconnut et se ressouvint de son enfance.

Nicolette (*chantant*):

Moi de si haut parentage,
Fille au roi de Carthage,
Être ainsi dans l'esclavage
Trainée par gent sauvage!
Aucassin gentil et sage,
Vos douces amours me hastent.
Donne Dieu le spirituel
Que je vous tienne en bras,
Damoiseau sire.

(*Elle se dégage.*)

Jongleur: Elle se déroba, vint à un port de mer. Là, prenant d'une herbe, elle s'en frotta la tête et le visage si bien qu'elle se rendit toute noire. Elle s'ajusta en guise de jongleur, prit son violon, vint à un marinier et le pria tant qu'il la mit dans sa nef. Les voiles sont tendues; on navigue tant par haute mer qu'on aborde en terre de Provence. Nicolette débarque, prend son violon et s'en va par le pays en violonnant, tant qu'enfin elle arrive au château où Aucassin était.

Scène VIII

À Beaucaire, sous la tour

(*Aucassin entouré de ses barons. Nicolette en habit de jongleur.*)

Nicolette (*chantant*):

Écoutez-moi, francs barons,
Ceux d'aval et ceux d'amont
Veuillez ouïr ma chanson.

Or Nicolette la preuse
Est à Carthage au donjon.
Son père qui l'aime moult
Est sire de ce royon.
Donner lui veut pour baron
Un roi de païens félon.
Nicolette n'en a soin
Car elle aime un dancellon
Qui Aucassin avait nom.
Bien jure Dieu et son nom
Jamais ne prende baron
S'elle n'a son améor
Qui tant désire.

AUCASSIN: Beau doux ami, ne savez-vous autre chose de cette Nicolette?

NICOLETTE: Seigneur, je la connais comme la plus vaillante, la plus gentille et la plus sage qui fût jamais.

AUCASSIN: Ah! beau doux ami, retournez en ce pays de Carthage, et dites-lui que je l'attends et que je n'aurai jamais femme qu'elle.

NICOLETTE: Seigneur, ne vous désolez pas. D'ici à peu de temps, je vous l'aurai amenée.
(*Elle sort.*)

SCÈNE IX

Le château de Beaucaire

(*Alors Nicolette va par la ville à la maison de la vicomtesse, elle lui confie son secret. La vicomtesse la rendit aussi belle qu'elle avait jamais été. Puis elle envoya une dame chercher Aucassin, son ami.*)

LA DAME: Aucassin, ne vous démentez plus, mais venez avec moi; Nicolette votre amie est venue vous trouver de lointains pays.

JONGLEUR (*chantant*):

Or l'espousa Aucassin;
Dame de Beaucaire en fit.
Ils menèrent leurs délis.
Or a sa joie Aucassin
Et Nicolette autresis,
La cantefable prend fin,
N'en sais plus dire.

(*Le jongleur vient les prendre chacun par la main. Ils saluent et sortent.*)

REFERENCES

Text: 1. French version: from Les Amours du bon vieux temps, by J. B. Sainte-Palaye, 1756, Paris. (Out of print.) Also Bourdillon (see 2).

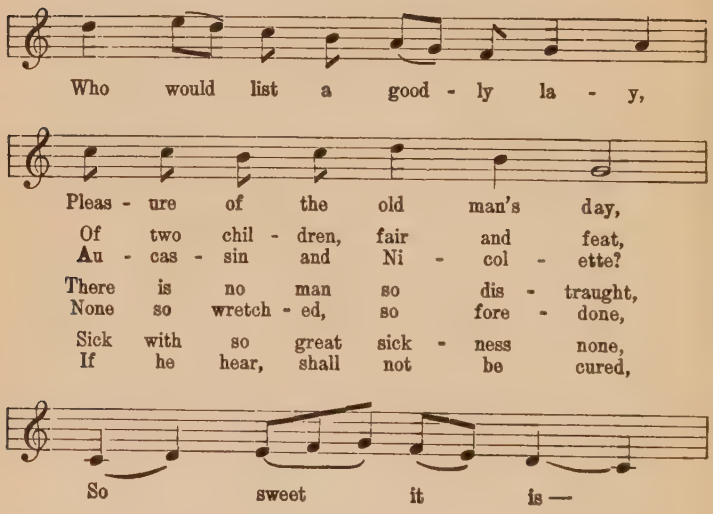
2. English version: from Aucassin and Nicolette, edited and translated by Francis W. Bourdillon; second edition, revised; Macmillan & Co., London, 1897. The translator's introduction and notes give much valuable information about the story.

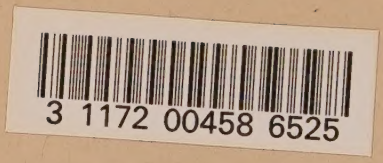
3. Sports and Pastimes of the People of England, by Joseph Strutt; numerous editions—London, 1903 etc.; offers much interesting detail. Aucassin's steed in our play was copied from a wood cut of a mediaeval miniature in this book.

Music: 1. The melody is printed in Bourdillon's Aucassin and Nicolette (see Text, 2) in the old notation, which children enjoy seeing. We give it below transposed into modern notation. See the suggestions for singing given under Music: 1, p. 107 (and in the preface, p. 135).

2. For a clear exposition of mediaeval modes see the article on Plain Chant in the Encyclopædia Britannica; also Bulletin No. 13, Series II, publ. by the History Reference Council, 14 Kirkland Place, Cambridge, Mass.

MELODY FOR THE CHANTE-FABLE OF AUCASSIN AND NICOLETTE


Who would list a good - ly la - y,
Pleas - ure of the old man's day,
Of two chil - dren, fair and feat,
Au - cas - sin and Ni - col - ette?
There is no man so dis - traught,
None so wretch - ed, so fore - done,
Sick with so great sick - ness none,
If he hear, shall not be cured,
So sweet it is —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